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SUMMER MAGIC

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COVER STORY



Classic country decor and French-inspired furnishings give this Georgian house its charm (see page 76).



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NEW-BUILD

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4I

I2



II6



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WELCOME

Blue, pink, red or yellow – do you know what your favourite colour is? And are the colours you use in the home the same as those you choose for your clothes? After having a wardrobe cull at the weekend, I noticed there's a lot of blue in there, but I also wear greys and white, and sometimes red or pink, but never yellow or purple. I then realised our house is a bit the same. Some areas are blue, others are grey or stony shades, and there's also deep red and hints of pink – a bit of a mix all round. But I'm definitely not someone who likes wearing black and white, with an interior to match. I know it's easy, but I love colour and pattern too much, and although I enjoy looking at white interiors, I'm not sure that suits our home – I'd worry too much about dirty marks. However, there are a few homes this month that are mainly white, and I do like them. The Wilkins' house on page 41 adds bold artwork to its neutral backdrop, giving it a striking look. Meanwhile, Laura Stafford-Deitsch's maisonette on page 71 is a fantastic example of using white and one accent colour. In this case, she's used different shades of blue, which looks great – although I might be biased because of my liking for this hue. But don't let me influence you – go and have a look for yourself.

Deborah

DEBORAH BARKER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

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PARED-BACK BEAUTY

After a devastating flood, this stone-built house in the Cotswolds needed extensive renovations



CALMING TONES

An eclectic mix of retro furnishings combine with neutral hues in this chic Hertfordshire home



CHARACTER BUILDING

Drive and determination was needed to ensure this Cornish cottage was sympathetically revived



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AUGUST

TRENDS | WHAT'S NEW | MUST-HAVE BUYS



EASTERN PROMISE

As Oriental style continues to inspire interior schemes, we show you how to adorn your home with this ornamental look, where grace and design unite

1 LIGHT THE WAY

Nickel bird lamp with grey shade, £100, Melody Maison

2 PRETTY PAGODA

Haven arbour, £549, Next

3 BASKET CASE

Lantern, from £30, House of Fraser

4 BOWLED OVER

Emma Bridgewater Water Lily

French bowl, £19, John Lewis

5 REFLECTED GLORY

Laura Oakes panelled boudoir

mirror, £50, Debenhams

6 DIVIDE & RULE

Flores screen, £850, John Lewis

7 SACRED STYLE

Buddha ornament, £10, Dunelm

8 COMFORT AND JOY

Designers Guild Plum Blossom cushion in fuchsia, £100, Amara

9 TASTE FOR TRADITION

Darcy teapot, £55, Alison Appleton

10 SURFACE APPEAL

Beijing coffee table, £495, 4Living



OASIS OF STYLE

This month we are inspired by the beauty of the desert. Go native with earth tones such as yellow ochre and sienna, and terracotta, leather, wood, metal, and stone materials

1 MIRAGE VISION

Copper hummingbird mirror, £185, Puji

2 CAMPFIRE TALES

Fallen Fruit low-fire bowl, £68, WorldStores

3 GUIDING LIGHT

Shipyards pendant in copper, £485, Davey Lighting

4 WILD WEST

Pablo lamp, £580, Jonathan Adler

5 ARTISAN FINISHES

Taratalla horn salt and pepper shaker set, £19, Lizard Orchid

6 RUSTIC RANCH

Wagon seat, £1,365, Ralph Lauren Home

7 DESERT LIFE

Abigail Ahern great sandy faux cactus, £168, Rockett St George

8 SHADES OF SAHARA

Tufted arrow cushion, £15, George Home

9 WIRE WORKS

Yena shallow wire bowl, £15, Habitat

10 GO WITH THE GRAIN

Saddle stool in oak and ash, £150, English Abode



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Q&A

Our resident interiors expert Rachel Leedham is on hand to answer all your decorating queries

CREATING PRIVACY

We are trying to decide on the best way to dress our dining room window, which is overlooked from the street. We don't want a very fussy treatment – what would you suggest?

GABBY JOHNSON, LONDON

You could invest in café-style shutters – the slats can be tilted for privacy, while allowing light in through the upper window. Shutterly Fabulous (0800 012 6615, shutterlyfabulous.com) will make shutters to fit any window, prices start at £290sq m, while designs in custom colours such as this Elephant Grey hue start at £320sq m. A quick, affordable solution is window film. The Window Film Company (01494 854204, windowfilm.co.uk) has a number of solutions, including plain Frostbite film, W150cm, £24m. You might also like a blind – opt for a bottom-up version that fixes to the bottom of the window and is raised using discreet pulleys. Eclectics (01843 608789, eclectics.co.uk) makes these in a vast array of fabrics, prices start at £178 for a window measuring W90cm with a drop of H100cm.



ILLUMINATED SIGN

Can you tell me where Elle and Mark Winsor Grime purchased the illuminated Love sign in their sitting room (p112, June 2015)? I've been looking for one like this for some time.

NATALIE CLARKE, BY EMAIL

Carnival-style letters are perfect for creating an individual piece of wall art. The sign was custom-made by Any Old Lights (01726 815522, anyoldlights.co.uk), which quotes around £350 for a similar piece. The company also sells huge standard letters through Fowey-based shop Brocante (01726 833390). They come in a choice of white, red, orange or yellow and measure H50cm, £180 each. Another option is to make a sign using neon letters. The Letterroom (01264 355488, theletterroom.com) sells neon letters (pictured), which range in width (10cm–23cm) and height (18–23cm) according to the letter, £45 each. You will also need a transformer; these start at £45 for a 1–3 letter word.



BROAD STRIPE

In Caroline O'Connor's sitting room (p138, June 2015), I spotted just the fabric I've been looking for to make some loose covers for my sofa. Where can I find a stripe like this?

CARYS HYWEL, BY EMAIL

A fresh blue-and-white stripe instantly evokes carefree summer days. I've found a few similar designs: from left, Ellora cotton, £35m, Fabrics & Papers (01273 495500, fabricsandpapers.com); Rocokoko 09 cotton, £35m, Malabar (020 7501 4200, malabar.co.uk); Broadway, which comes in a choice of four different blues including Chambray linen mix, £30m, Clarke & Clarke (01706 242010, Clarke-clark.co.uk).

EMPIRE CHANDELIER

I would love to know where I could find the beautiful chandelier in Sophie Lambert and Phillippe Alric's dining room (p74, October 2014).

FIONA BORCH, BY EMAIL

Jill Perry of Norfolk Decorative Antiques (01328 856333, antique-lightingandchandeliers.co.uk) tells me that this Swedish Empire-style light is almost certainly a reproduction design dating from the 1960s or '70s. These do come up from time to time. Her advice is to visit the portal website Decorative Collective (decorativecollective.com),

which sells pieces from 132 dealers all on one website. The real Swedish antique versions are incredibly rare and will sell for several thousand pounds. For a modern version, look at the range by Gustavian (020 7060 2680, gustavian.com), which includes this six-light Empire Chandelier, H64cm x Dia48cm, £990.



STORAGE BENCH

To resolve the problem of clutter that builds up in my hall, I am looking for a bench with shelves underneath where my children can put their shoes. Can you help me find one?

SARAH BROOKES, MANCHESTER

A multitasking piece like this should help in the battle against hallway clutter. The Cotswold Company (0333 200 1725, cotswoldco.com) has a few options, a number with concealed drawers and a few with open shelves or wicker baskets, which will probably prove easier for your children to access. The Farmhouse

wicker storage seat, H46 x W120 x D37cm, has an ivory paint finish and comes with a wicker seat and three baskets, £149. For a more contemporary feel, you might like the Whatsit storage bench by Loaf (0845 468 0627, loaf.com), H50 x W120 x D40cm, which features a wire base and a tie-on seat pad in rustic linen, £275.

COW PARSLEY PAINTING

Could you please help me source a painting or print of cow parsley like the one that hangs in Karen Campbell's garden room (p22, November 2014)?

SUSAN MILES, BY EMAIL

This botanical painting helps to bring the garden right into Karen's home. The piece is an oil on canvas by artist Rory Browne (07812 596690, rorybrowne.co.uk), whose works start at around £500 for a small commission; a similar 137 x 152cm painting (below) sold for £5,400. The website Photo4me (01622 370505, photo4me.com) features a striking photographic print of cow parsley by Heather Watkins, which can be ordered in a variety of sizes. Prices start at £78 for a canvas print measuring 45.7 x 30.5cm.



GET IN TOUCH

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BUILDING A DREAM

After securing the perfect site, Amélie and Numa Vernet couldn't wait to create their longed-for holiday home in the French Basque region

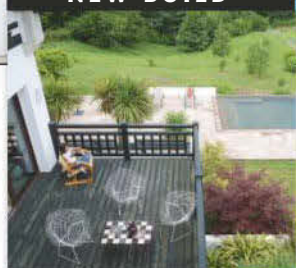
FEATURE ERICA MILLER | PHOTOGRAPHY JEAN-MARC WULLSCHLEGER/LIVING AGENCY

OUTDOOR KITCHEN AND TERRACE

Eclectic styling in this area makes it the perfect spot for relaxed meals.

The Wire Eiffel stool, £59 each, The Farthing, is comparable. For a similar garden table with benches try the Ängsö with two benches, £270, Ikea. The Bistro tablecloth, from £48, Ville & Campagne, is a match

NEW-BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached property, built in 2007

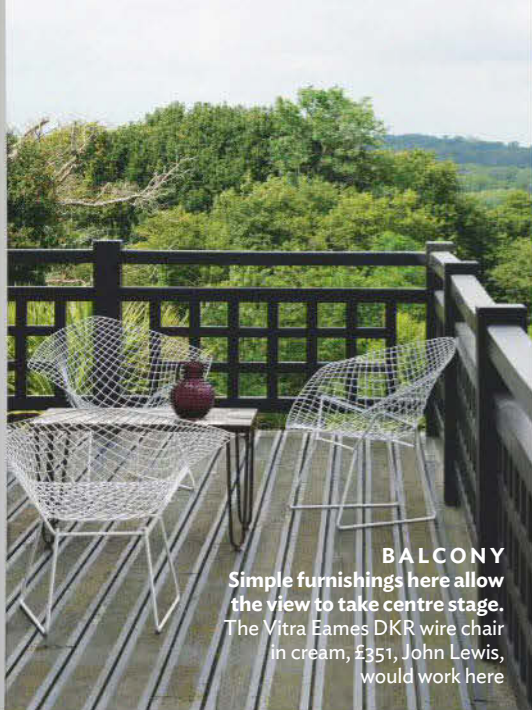
LOCATION Near Biarritz, southwest France

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen, playroom, TV room, six bedrooms (four en suite), bathroom, outdoor dining area, terrace

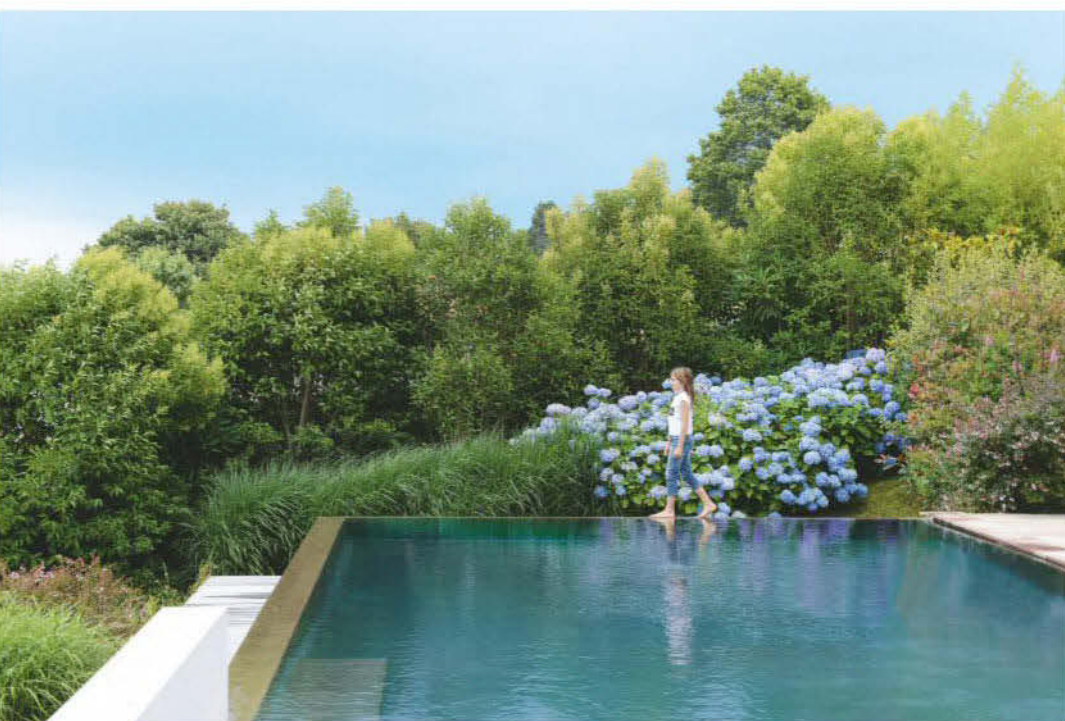
PURCHASED 2007

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We also have an apartment in Paris, says Amélie.



BALCONY
Simple furnishings here allow the view to take centre stage. The Vitra Eames DKR wire chair in cream, £351, John Lewis, would work here



OUTDOOR DINING AREA
The large custom-made ipé wood table is where the couple enjoy meals with family – including their niece Mila, seen here. Africa director's chair, £45, Habitat, is similar. Palladium triple bronze pendant light, £520, Alexander & Pearl, has this look



KITCHEN
A modern light fitting keeps this traditional-style space contemporary. Saarinen 244cm oval dining table in Arabescato marble, £7,044, The Conran Shop. The Factory rectangular pendant lamp is comparable, £200, Maisons du Monde

LESSONS LEARNT *'It's a good idea to work with local tradesmen who are familiar with regional materials and techniques'*

Having spent many happy holidays in the French Basque region, Amélie and Numa Vernet had long nursed a dream of finding their own holiday retreat on the scenic Bay of Biscay.

The couple have been together for 25 years and share an apartment in Paris. But despite their urban lifestyle, their love affair with this area of untamed beauty – where mountains meet ocean, the coastline is dotted with beaches and rocky coves, and stylish seaside resorts and pretty villages cling

to the rolling green foothills – made them determined to turn their dream into a reality.

So, eight years ago, the design-savvy pair set about finding the ideal site to build the new home they longed for. Eventually, a perfect plot came along, in a protected rural site just two kilometres from the coast, surrounded by boundless nature.

Once the right location was secured, Amélie and Numa began to design their contemporary house. They had a clear vision and, unburdened by any need to compromise, they were ready to create

something out of the ordinary. 'As we live in Paris, a busy capital city, we wanted space, light and a place with beautiful outlooks,' says Amélie. 'Most of the rooms command views of the countryside, so we wanted to be connected to the natural surroundings.'

The house took eight months to build from scratch. Working alongside an architect and a construction site supervisor, Amélie was on hand to project-manage the work from start to finish, and her determination and energy paid off as the property began to take shape. 'Everything

TV ROOM

The custom-made shelves are actually salvaged antique doors. Curtains made from Borderline ZigZag fabric, £86m, Alexander Interiors. Swoon Editions' Demi stool in oatmeal linen is similar to this one, £99. The Finleigh braided chair, £220, Out There Interiors, would work here



FAVOURITE ITEM *'I love the fireplace – it was sculpted in plaster then patinated and finished with wax'*



SITTING ROOM

Contrasting pops of deep blue and red lend an artistic flair to this relaxing space.

The Hanoi armchair in light, upholstered in Grace Terracotta is comparable, £750, John Lewis. Maisons du Monde's Bahia coffee table, £150, would suit this scheme. The ceramic bottle table lamp is similar, £195, The White Company



STAIRCASE
This spectacular architectural feature sits at the centre of the house. Maroc Tribal sells vintage kilim rugs, from £205



LANDING
The coral sculpture here connects this enclosed space with its coastal surroundings. For a wall colour like this try Lilac Heather paint mixing matt, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux



MASTER BEDROOM
Bespoke light wood cupboards display Amélie's collection of old globes. Try the Old World globe, £190, Stanfords. The Langley lace border bedlinen, £70 for a double duvet cover, John Lewis, would suit this scheme



GUEST EN SUITE
Blue accents keep the scheme looking fresh. Try the Shakespeare roll-top tub, £250, Victoria Plumb

went smoothly, despite the fact that the local builders would only ever talk to Numa, and not to me,' laughs Amélie. 'They assumed he was the decision maker.'

With the work successfully completed, the couple and their children, Isabelle, now 25, and Jean, 18, took up residence. The finished house has a unique character, designed to make the most of the glorious natural environment. Outside, a sheltered exterior kitchen and a dining area offers the chance to enjoy alfresco meals with family and visitors. Elsewhere, a sleek and stylish outdoor infinity pool provides an idyllic spot to relax among the lush greenery of the grounds. 'The garden was

designed by a landscape architect, as it's in a protected area with rolling hills,' explains Amélie. 'It has been planted with laurels, blue hydrangeas, lavender and scattered wild grasses.'

Much thought and care has gone into the interiors, too. Amélie clearly has an intuitive feel for what a room needs, and a good eye when it comes to decor. She opted for predominantly neutral room schemes punctuated with bursts of colour. 'We wanted to create a home that was eclectic, colourful and charming, with a predominance of red,' she says. 'The Basque province is known for a particular shade of red called "rouge Basque",

which was integral to the design.' It is a tone that complements the location perfectly and gives the home its identity. Amélie's mission was to fill the house with vibrant artworks and unique artefacts, and these one-of-a-kind pieces are displayed everywhere. 'We buy a lot of stuff from flea markets and antiques shops,' she says. 'In fact, we bought everything and stored it before we even built the house.'

Now the property is finished, the family try to spend time there as often as possible. 'I love it here,' says Amélie. 'It's such a relaxing environment – quite a departure from our busy lives in Paris – and is just the perfect place to recharge our batteries.' 25

Insight

BUYING ABROAD

Inspired by Amélie Vernet's Biarritz getaway? Take the headache out of buying overseas with our advice

Purchasing an overseas property, whether it's just for holidays or as a permanent home, can provide an exciting change of lifestyle, but there are several factors to consider. Be prepared to undertake thorough research and ensure that you buy the property through a reputable, licensed estate agent. Arranging your finances, and taking into account fees, taxes and mortgages is a priority, as well as appointing an experienced lawyer who can expertly handle overseas transactions.

The right spot

Finding the perfect house in the right location can be a daunting task. So it helps if you are familiar with the country and region in which you want to buy. Do consider the primary purpose of your purchase – if you are buying partially as a holiday rental, easily accessible amenities are particularly important.

Several property portals, such as Savills, Knight Frank and Rightmove have overseas divisions, providing a useful kick-start to your search. But visiting the area and establishing a relationship with the local estate agencies is the best way to get to know how the market works, as well as the advantages and pitfalls of buying abroad. Before embarking on a purchase,

investigate the local tax position regarding sale and succession rights on death, too. For example, under the Napoleonic Code in France, there are certain rights of inheritance that cannot be avoided.

Legal must-do

Once your offer on a property is accepted, it's essential to appoint an independent solicitor to handle your interests. In European countries, as well as some others, a notary (an impartial government official) will oversee the transaction for both buyer and seller, running searches and checking the property's title deeds are in order, as well as arranging the payment of taxes and officially recording the sale. But it's advisable to appoint an English-speaking lawyer who can handle local land transactions effectively, ensuring a smooth process and explaining the purpose of official documents.

Take into consideration that in France, the notary will charge a percentage of the sale value for fees and taxes. Have funds ready – some UK banks provide mortgages for overseas properties, especially if they have branches in the area of purchase. Alternatively, you can take out an overseas mortgage, but remember that this is not subject to the Financial Services Authority's regulations.

EXPERT EYE *'Be prepared to give power of attorney to your lawyer if you are unable to personally attend the completion meeting. The usual way to do this is for powers to be set out in dual columns, with English and the local language side-by-side. It's essential that all documents can be properly translated, as they are operative only in their original language. Always know exactly what you are signing'*

PETER BURTON, RICE-JONES & SMITHS



PROFESSIONAL ADVICE



'There's a lot more to buying a home abroad than viewing a few properties. It requires a great deal of research and several visits to the area.

Maps on website listings are not always completely accurate and may show you to the nearest village rather than the property – ask for the coordinates instead. Be aware of the idiosyncrasies of certain areas – in parts of Tuscany, for example, it's difficult to find a country house within walking distance of a village.

Once you've found your dream home, it's easy to get carried away refurbishing. Consider what use you will make of the property. Does it need complete rewiring in order to install a smart home system, especially if it is a second home? Equally, the investment you make may be difficult to recover if you come to sell it.

You may want a property only for personal use now, but needs change. Work may take you to another continent for a few years or the children might fly the nest. If you decide to let your home, is there a suitable room for storing your belongings? Think about whether the house can be "compartmentalised", so you can rent out only part of it. For instance, are there outbuildings that could be cottages?'

JELENA CVJETKOVIC, SAVILLS

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GORGEIOUS GEORGIAN

*Jo Pilkington used bold
colours and contemporary
wallpaper to create an
individual look in her
Grade II listed home*

FEATURE AMANDA HARLING
PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

SITTING ROOM

Jo left the windows free of curtains to show their fine proportions and the view of the Black Mountains.

Walls painted in Skylight estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Loft sofa in fuchsia linen, £2,320, Baileys. Find similar rugs from a selection at The Oriental Rug Shop. Madison mirrored 40cm cube table is a match, £150, Next. For a mirror like this try Overmantels, from £1,300

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Grade II listed Georgian rectory with Victorian additions.

LOCATION Herefordshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen, breakfast room, study, playroom, utility room, cloakroom, seven bedrooms (two en suite), five bathrooms

PURCHASED 2010

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We used to live in a maisonette in Camden, London,' says Jo.





HALL

This spacious area is an ideal location for the baby grand piano and portrait of one of Jo's ancestors. Charcoal Butterflies wallpaper, £240 per roll, Timorous Beasties. Similar coloured lights, £36, Notonthehighstreet.com. Elisabeth James Antiques sells Georgian sideboards like this one, price on application

FAVOURITE SHOP *'I love online store Hannah's Treasures – it's like walking into a virtual Aladdin's cave of vintage wallpapers'*

TERRACE

This is a perfect spot for summer drinks. The Manivelle dining table would look good here, £800, Maisons du Monde



When Jo Pilkington and her husband Al Farquhar uprooted themselves and their three daughters Hope, 10, Edie, 8, and Romy, 6, from London, it was because they wanted the girls to grow up in the countryside. 'Also, as a TV producer, I was doing long hours and I felt it was time for a change,' explains Jo. 'Luckily, as Al works from home, we could move anywhere.'

The ideal spot turned out to be a former rectory in a tiny village in Herefordshire. 'I knew I'd found our new home when I walked through the door and saw tall windows facing west across miles of countryside towards the Welsh Black Mountains,' says Jo. 'The previous owners had lived there for 40 years and considerable updating was needed. But the prospect of realising my ideas in a three-storey country home was a dream come true.'

Before the fun part could begin, roofing, heating, wiring and plumbing had to be dealt with. 'Adapting a Grade II listed house to 21st-century living takes patience and an ever-expanding budget,' says Jo. 'Most of the money went into things you can't see, but we now have a warm home in winter, five bathrooms and a new roof.'

Along with the property, Jo acquired several items of antique furniture from the previous owners, including a mahogany sideboard, two bookcases, an overmantel mirror and an Oriental rug. However, in most respects, the house has undergone a total transformation. Jo reconfigured the living area by moving the kitchen from the Victorian wing at one end of the house to



KITCHEN

Traditional elements such as the floor in grey slate contrast with crisp white metro tiles, white surfaces and zingy orange cabinets.

Grey riven slate floor tiles, from £15sq m, Mandarin Stone. Corian island surface, price on request, Mayflower Kitchens. Retro Metro tiles, £63.73sq m, Fired Earth. Oak stools, £145 each, Cox & Cox



PLAYROOM

This former dining room was transformed with pale lilac walls and grey-painted floorboards, with accessories adding bright notes of colour.

Floor painted in Paris Grey chalk paint, £18.95 per litre, Annie Sloan. The New England Stars and Stripes rug, £85, Hicks & Hicks, would work here. Similar deer stag head, £39, Cowshed Interiors

BREAKFAST ROOM

An antique oak table is surrounded by mismatched chairs and a bench to create an informal feel.

For a similar refectory table try Wakelin & Linfield, £7,950. Songbird wallpaper in cream on white foil, price on application, Anna French





BATHROOM

As this room had no windows, Jo installed reclaimed stained glass panels in the wall, which filter light in from the landing.

Shakespeare roll-top bath is similar, £249, Victoria Plumb. Sink splashback made from tile coasters, £7.50 each, Cafe Press



GUEST BEDROOM

A silver foil floral wallpaper and an ornate bed add glamour here.

Wallpaper, Birds in a Bush, £82.50 per roll, Anna French. Sylvia king-size silver bed, £1,410, The French Bedroom Company

DECORATING TIP *'Don't be afraid to mix styles. Contemporary kitchens, bathrooms and furniture breathe new life into period buildings'*



CLOAKROOM

Jo has expressed her quirkier side in this vibrant scheme.

La Fontaine toile wallpaper is a good match, £47 per roll, Fabrics & Papers. Vinyl raspberry pink floor tiles, £42.95sq m, Harvey Maria

the opposite end. 'Part of my plan was to replace an existing sun room with an extension incorporating a breakfast room next to the new kitchen, and a bathroom on the floor above,' explains Jo. 'The planners stipulated that the new part had to be eco-friendly and modern in style – which was fine with us.' The former kitchen is now Al's office, from where he runs his music business and manages the social networking of Mad Dogs and Vintage Vans – Jo's glamping business that operates in the adjoining paddock.

The predominantly white replacement kitchen benefits from the west-facing view. 'Rather than styling a whole room in one colour, I prefer to add touches here and there, so I chose a zingy orange for the cupboards and the base of the island unit to contrast with the greenery outside,' says Jo. In the breakfast room, French windows open onto steps leading to the terrace.

Quirky vintage style is clearly Jo's forte, as can be seen in her choice of wallpapers. In the hall, a bright butterfly design lends a decorative accent, an amusing toile adds flair to a cloakroom, while a metallic wallpaper with a tarnished foil background was chosen for the breakfast room, reflecting the light all day long. Another shimmering paper featuring a pattern of birds and climbing roses turns up the glamour levels in the attic bedroom, where a burnished silver-leaf bedstead awaits visiting guests. 'It feels like a retreat up there, and the antique pink quilt bought on a trip to France reminds me of Parisian attic bedrooms,' says Jo. 'We've got friends queuing to come and stay through the summer, so I must have done something right.' 25



BATHROOM

The walls are lined with floorboards recycled from the former study, which were laboriously sanded and limewashed to give them a lighter appearance. Similar polished concrete surfaces, price on application, Cretecraft. Parquet Turquoise vinyl floor tiles, £42.95sq m, Harvey Maria



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DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

18th-century farmhouse

LOCATION French Riviera

ROOMS Hall, two sitting rooms, dining room, kitchen-diner, study, utility room, pool house, five bedrooms (all en suite)

PURCHASED 2003

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'My permanent home is a modern flat in Monaco,' says Philippe.

GOOD LIFE

Philippe Boudariat turned his back on the hurly-burly of big business to create the perfect hillside retreat

FEATURE ALIX O'NEILL | **PHOTOGRAPHY** LIVING INSIDE



POOL HOUSE

With an outdoor oven and fridge, this area is great for entertaining. For a similar chair try the 4 Seasons Aberdeen, £219, Hayes Garden World. Blessing Lotus Ruyao tea set, £60, Umifeasets, is a match



FAVOURITE ROOM *'The kitchen is a fantastic place to be whatever the season. The doors open out to the garden for alfresco dining, while the fire creates a cosy atmosphere'*

UTILITY ROOM

A collection of vintage botanical prints found at a local flea market is a charming addition to this neutral space.

Willow laundry basket, £25, John Lewis, has this look. Find a good range of botanical artwork, from £9.99 each, Art.co.uk. For similar tiles try the Terracotta range at Mandarin Stone, from £13.04sq m



KITCHEN-DINER

Boasting a large oval table and a baby grand piano, this is a great spot for lazy Sunday afternoon lunches.

Balmoral oak oval table, £798, Oak Furniture UK, would work here. Moroccan ceiling light, £55, Moroccan Bazaar, is near-identical. Verdi crockery, from £10, Oka, is comparable



After years of working long hours to a frantic schedule, Philippe Boudariat realised it was important to find time to relax, so he began looking for his dream holiday home. After flicking through property magazines and having looked at dozens of houses surrounding the French Riviera, he had almost given up hope of finding the perfect place to escape to and shrug off the pace of his busy working life. But eventually, a rundown 18th-century farmhouse between Cannes and Nice captured his imagination.

'The house required significant repair work,' explains Philippe. 'The rooms were small with low ceilings and

until the 1960s, goats had been kept in the cellar.' But none of this deterred him, which wasn't surprising as the property was just an hour's drive from his main home and office in Monaco. Surrounded by rolling olive groves and close to historic hilltop villages, it had the tranquil rustic charm that Philippe had craved.

To help him sympathetically modernise his new home, Philippe enlisted the services of Marianne Dengis, an interior designer who had decorated his office in the past. 'As Marianne knows me quite well,' I was happy to let her have free rein,' he says. 'My only requirement was that it had to be cosy – somewhere I could really relax.' In



SITTING ROOM The fireplace was made in Provençal vernacular style.

For rugs similar to this one try Anthropologie, from £58. Lille sofa, £549, Swoon Editions, suits this style. Trestle table, from £848, Driftwood Treasures at Etsy, is a close match

order to achieve this, Marianne installed chimneys in the old fireplaces before renovating the kitchen and bathrooms, and replacing the windows. 'It was quite a task,' she says. 'The house was in a bad state, but it had potential.' Internal walls and original features, such as the exposed beams, were updated with fresh white paint, while terracotta flooring was chosen to retain the character. Marianne's signature style of elegant simplicity met Philippe's brief for a calm environment, but colourful finds from global travels add a soulful feel.

'Gorgeous fabrics and unique pieces of furniture are my passion,' explains Marianne. 'Every time I go away, I love finding items I can use in my home or one of my clients' properties.' Throughout the house, there are

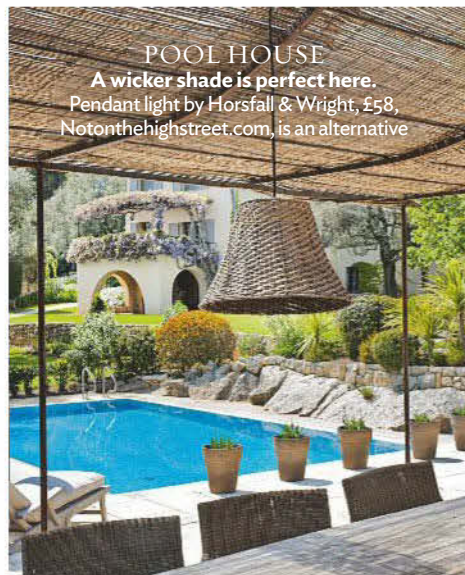
touches of exoticism: Turkish kilims strewn casually over beds, cushions in bold Ikat and geometric fabrics from Zanzibar, plus a unique Indian coffee table. They add an eclectic edge as well as the comfort Philippe desired.

Marianne's talents, however, extend beyond interiors. After working her magic indoors, she set her sights on building a pool house so Philippe could entertain on balmy summer evenings. She also created a vegetable patch that provides tomatoes, cucumbers and aubergines. Beyond this is an olive grove with hundreds of trees. 'I'll always bring homemade oil to friends as a present,' says Philippe, who has settled into his new way of life at the weekends. 'Marianne has created such a cosy ambience – it really is an idyllic bolthole where I can unwind.' 25



**MASTER
BEDROOM**
**Bold fabrics sourced
from across the
globe add character.**
Juliette bench, £199,
Swoon Editions, has
a similar Gustavian
look. Kira fabric is a
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to the curtains,
£50m, Harlequin

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LONDON CALLING

It took a diamond-in-the-rough-type of a property in the capital to tempt Lara and Jon Wilkins away from their nomadic lives

FEATURE JOANNA SIMMONS
PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON BROWN



SITTING ROOM

'This space on the ground floor is used for gatherings with our friends,' explains Lara. Flopa sofa, price on request, Francesco Binfare for Edra. For a rug like this one try City Cows, £239. Paoletti c leopard-print cushion, £13, TK Maxx, is similar. Working Dog painting by Adam Cullen



KITCHEN-DINER/FAMILY ROOM
A classic all-white scheme is personalised with a sprinkling of glam and quirky ingredients. Softline coffee table, £146, Wayfair, is near-identical. Mooodi Raimond pendant lamp, £1,210, Houseology. Windows and pillar painted in Railings estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



FAMILY ROOM
'I really like the lived-in look the bookshelves create,' says Lara. Custom-made shelves, Manning Bespoke. Natura Oak Sky Grey herringbone parquet, £41sq m, Flooringsupplies.co.uk, is a match

Fashion designer Lara Wilkins and husband Jon bought their semi-detached Georgian house in London from author Martin Amis in 2011. 'It was a supermodel-in-a-scruffy-coat kind of place in need of some sprucing up, but essentially gorgeous,' recalls Lara. 'We were living in Sydney at the time, so it wasn't really the right time to be buying a house, but I loved it immediately and could imagine Sunday mornings with our twin sons Alfie and Max (now 6) running around. I pictured it as a special family home and didn't want it to slip away.'

Instead of returning to London, Jon's advertising work took the family to New York for a further two years of expat life. Friends rented their London home but would call the couple almost on a weekly basis about the latest leak or damp patch. 'It got so bad that we just had to tackle it,' says Lara. And so they did. The renovation started in January 2013, with architect Chris Eaton of Stiff + Trevillion, and contractor Jon Loveday leading the charge.

Lara flew back a couple of times during the nine-month build, but many of the decisions were made remotely. Having completed a couple of previous projects, she found it strangely liberating redesigning her home from across the Atlantic. 'It was easier than I thought,' she says. 'We did a lot via email – Chris would send images of eight slabs of marble for the kitchen island and I would pick one. You can take so long agonising over these things, so it was quite nice having to be decisive. It also felt good to visit the property only occasionally and see really marked progress every time.'

The family moved in that September. 'I returned a week ahead of the boys and rushed around getting their rooms ready and buying

DECORATING TIP *'Display books, accessories and items you've picked up from holidays to express your personality'*

UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Four-storey Georgian semi

LOCATION London

ROOMS Sitting room, kitchen-diner/family room, study, utility room, playroom, four bedrooms (two en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in Sydney before we bought this house,' says Lara.

bedding,' says Lara. With the new Chelsea and Arsenal duvet covers (the boys are big football fans) in place, the house was furnished with the couple's existing pieces – a mix of vintage, designer and modern items. 'I was worried about how it would all sit together and also if everything would fit in,' says Lara. 'We unpacked the stuff in storage here, and thought the house felt quite full, then everything arrived from New York and Sydney!'

Plenty of custom-built storage solved that problem, leaving space for displaying favourite pieces, too. 'I like having our crazy accessories out,' says Lara. 'I don't want everything to look too serious and styled – we want a warm and relaxed feel.' Walls are peppered with art celebrating icons of British popular culture,

and Martin Amis's writing studio in the garden is now Jon's man cave, full of sports memorabilia. 'The boys will inherit it eventually,' says Lara, 'and get up to who knows what in there.'

For now, though, the family are happy to be back in the UK and settled in their new home. Long-distance renovating worked out pretty well for them, with just one minor mishap. 'To help Max and Alfie feel excited about returning to London, I let them choose their own bunk bed online,' explains Lara. 'Not only did they pick a really expensive Danish one that took ages to arrive, it was also too wide to fit up the stairs and had to be winched in through the window. So my only advice to anyone designing their home remotely would be to keep the kids off the laptop and always measure your stairs.' 25

DINING AREA
'By creating a double-height space, lots more light flows in, which works wonderfully with the table,' says Lara.

Modern classics Eero Saarinen Tulip oval table, £1,325, Design Icons. Vitra Eames DSW side chair, £332, John Lewis

LAST WORD *'I put my heart and soul into this house. Our previous homes abroad felt quite short term, whereas this feels permanent – it's the perfect family sanctuary'*



MASTER BEDROOM

A focal-point chandelier and metallic fabrics lend a lux and elegant look. Sealy Cressida divan bed, from £499, Isme, would work well here. Kartell Bloom ceiling light, £496, Design55. Kartell Bourgie lamp, £211, Amara



BATHROOM

An eclectic mix of art and curios adds interest to this all-white setting. For similar Alberto Vargas prints try Allposters.co.uk, from £8. Bard & Brazier towel rail, £971, Original Bathrooms



MAX & ALFIE'S ROOM

The boys' bunk bed fits neatly into a corner, maximising space. Wave 2 bunk bed, price on request, Mimondo. Kartell cabinet, £58, Heal's. Walls painted in Calluna estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



PLAYROOM

Lara and Jon created a fun space for their sons to hang out in. Junior Panton chair by Verner Panton for Vitra, £138, The Conran Shop. Colourburst multi rug, from £10, John Lewis, is a close match

MADE WITH LOVE

Chef Leila Lindholm has created the perfect recipe for a wonderful family home

FEATURE
SEÁN O'CONNELL
PHOTOGRAPHY
MARTIN LOF/LIVING INSIDE

UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

A 1920s detached house

LOCATION

Södermanland, Sweden

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, dining area, family room, study, four bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2009

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before this, we lived in a flat in Stockholm,' says Leila.

SITTING ROOM

A book-print wallcovering lends a library feel to this relaxed space. Bookshelf wallpaper by Young & Battaglia, £70 per roll, Rockett St George. The Wexford occasional chairs are similar to these, from £950 each, Laura Ashley. The Zentique iron birdcage would work here, £135, Polyvore



DINING AREA
 'I use the table a lot and also sit there with my laptop sometimes,' says Leila. The Pauillac wooden and charcoal grey dining table is comparable, £900, Maisons du Monde



Leila Lindholm's Swedish home could have been built specially for her and her husband Mårten. 'We were living in an apartment in Stockholm but needed a bigger place for our growing family,' she says. 'One of my requirements was a large garden, and here, there's land on all four sides with a lake nearby, so it was the perfect fit for us.'

The house was special for another reason: it was built in 1922 by renowned architect Ragnar Östberg. 'The property was clearly created by someone talented,' says Leila, 'It's so well-planned – from the materials used, to the dimensions of the rooms, and even the way the light falls.'

Although the large four-storey house had become badly run down, the couple were unfazed. Leila, who has always loved

interior design, had clear ideas on how it could be renovated and the couple set to work on reintroducing architectural features lost over time. 'Fortunately we were able to have the work done while living in our apartment,' says Leila.

They knocked through the odd wall here and there to make the rooms more light and user-friendly. 'The house was built in a formal style, and had individual rooms with distinct functions,' says Leila, 'but as we don't live like that, it has been updated with a modern lifestyle in mind.'

In particular, the kitchen had to meet the needs of Leila, a famous chef in Sweden. 'The 1980s units needed replacing, so we had bespoke cabinetry built,' she says. As well as creating an area that enabled her to surround herself with the utensils of her



FAMILY ROOM

The casual array of cushions makes this a cosy place to curl up.

The Stanza sofa, £1,200, DFS, is similar. Number cushion covers, £38 each, Day Birger et Mikkelsen





DECORATING TIP *'When furnishing a room, start from the centre outwards instead of working from the walls inwards'*

KITCHEN-DINER

Leila's cooking space is crammed with her collection of kitchen utensils.

Hague Blue estate eggshell is a good match for the cabinetry paint colour, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. The Culinary Concepts Cotes de Provence cake stand is similar, £113, John Lewis



HALL
‘I love how light streams in here,’ says Leila.
Find a similar Swedish-style small coffee table, £460, The Swedish Chair

trade, Leila chose marble worktops. The result is an artfully cluttered kitchen where you can imagine any chef feeling at home.

The charm of the kitchen extends into the sitting room, with its profusion of light thanks to generous windows on three sides, and the sociably arranged collection of new and old furniture and accessories. ‘This room is perfect for when we have visitors,’ says Leila. ‘It’s a place where people feel at home.’ And when friends aren’t around, the couple and their children Walter, 6, and Olivia, 2, hang out in the family room, a large sociable space on the first floor. ‘I’ve kept the furniture very uncoordinated as mismatched sofas give the area more life,’ says Leila.

Moving into a house with so much space brought about its own pleasant

problems, such as the need to buy more furniture to fill it with. Luckily, Leila had already amassed lots of accessories with which to adorn the walls. ‘As well as family photos and memorabilia, I collect items I love and find a place for them,’ she says.

Leila concedes that it takes a while to make a home. ‘It doesn’t happen in a week or two – this place has been gradually growing piece by piece and it finally came together after about three years,’ she says. Regarding the decor, she felt the need to do justice to a property of such distinction. ‘It’s a very elegant building, which is why I lean towards a classic feel.’

Most of all though, this is a house created for the family. Like the delicious cakes that are Leila’s speciality, this home has been made with love and good taste. **25**



GUEST BEDROOM
Plain curtains contrast with the patterned scheme.

Ralph Lauren Ashfield Floral wallpaper, £74 per roll, Wallpaper Direct



STUDY

In keeping with the rest of the house, Leila’s office has a tranquil feel
Bekväm step stool, £14, Ikea



MASTER BEDROOM

Opulent styling gives this room a feeling of luxury.

Casablanca ceiling pendant, £245, Graham and Green. For a similar headboard try the Yeald, from £393, Wayfair

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

Nancy and Dutch Nimmo created a fun and inviting home that perfectly reflects its sunny West Coast location

FEATURE MAXINE CLARKE
PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN ELLIS/LIVING INSIDE



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached ranch house, built in 1977

LOCATION Laguna Niguel, Southern California

ROOMS Dining room, sitting room/family room/kitchen-diner, library, utility room, cloakroom, four bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite)

PURCHASED 2002

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We used to live in a family house in the same neighbourhood, with our two daughters,' says Nancy.

DINING AREA

Nancy is a big collector of vintage ceramics and they perfectly complement her striking painted furniture. Sellingantiques.co.uk stocks a selection of blue-and-white porcelain, from £120 for a plate. Preloved is a good place to find upcycled antique dining furniture; and Blue Vein water-based eggshell, £29 for 1 litre, Paint Library, is a similar shade





PORCH
The patriotic colour scheme continues to this outdoor area. Modern red-and-white criss-cross stripes cushion, £37, Zazzle, is comparable to this one



GARDEN
Due to the warm climate, the couple and 'The Girls' (their dogs) spend most of the time outside in this inviting space.

DESIGN INSPIRATION
'We visited The Hamptons and it had such a big influence on the style of this place both inside and out'



KITCHEN
An open-plan layout means that Nancy is never alone when cooking. Ingolf, £45, Ikea, is an alternative white bar stool; pair it with a Dotty chunky seat pad in Powder, £7.50, Leekes. The contemporary silver pocket watch metal clock, £55, Jazz it Up Interiors, looks much like this one



LIBRARY
The ideal place to relax with a good book. Mini Star Fish cushion, £68, Jan Constantine, is similar. Try document storage boxes, from £12, The Holding Company



MASTER BEDROOM
‘I’ve never had so much blue in a house before – it’s like living under the sky,’ says Nancy. Try the Alexander Rose white painted Drachman bench, £179, Home & Garden Centre. For wicker storage boxes try Choice Baskets, from £12



Thirteen years ago, on the day Nancy and Dutch Nimmo’s youngest daughter Catherine graduated from high school, the couple decided it was time to think about their own future. ‘My husband said to me, “If we’re going to be empty nesters then we need a plan, so let’s get a new home and redo it,”’ recalls Nancy.

‘Throwing ourselves into a project sounded like a great idea – it was either that or he’d end up buying a red Corvette or something crazy.’

Nancy’s good friend, interior designer Terri Barnum, offered to help the pair find a house. ‘While out doing our charity walks together, we’d admire properties as we were passing,’ says Nancy, ‘and when I’d get tired, she’d say, “We can’t stop now, there are more houses to see.” That’s what got me across the finish line!’ One of the homes on the women’s hit list was about a mile away from the Nimmos’ existing house in Southern California. ‘The fact that it was only one storey and had a view of a golf course was what first attracted me to it,’ says Nancy. ‘And it needed a lot of updating.’

The couple got to work straight away, with a crew of contractors. ‘My husband did a lot of the woodworking and smaller jobs,’ says Nancy, ‘and I was just the general gofer.’ Breaking it down into Projects A, B and C, they started by refitting the kitchen, and knocking through rooms to create a free-flowing layout. ‘We used to have what’s commonly called “a pastor parlour”, which is a room that’s always

beautifully done up but that no-one ever uses,’ explains Nancy.

‘Instead, we’ve designed this place so that we live in every square foot of it, and there’s space for our daughters Catherine and Margaret, their husbands and our new granddaughter Kaylee. There are no doors, which allows people to wander in and out – it’s so sociable.’

All four bedrooms and two bathrooms were tackled next, and the garden. ‘We took a little break before upgrading the heating units and doing those nasty but essential jobs, and all the windows were removed and replaced,’ continues Nancy. Then Terri helped out with the interior. ‘Dutch and I always wanted the house to feel like a homely, lived-in cottage and Terri was very gentle in guiding us to make better choices – she never imposed her look. We discussed most of the interior while on our walks – it was a good time to bounce ideas off her.’

As a fan of New England style, Nancy chose a soft white for the interior, which acts as a neutral backdrop for her quirky accessories. ‘Nantucket, Hampton and Cape Cod are all styles of coastal living that are informal, nature-oriented and peaceful,’ she explains. ‘We’ve found all those qualities here – even though we’re four miles from the ocean.’

The renovation project took around six years to complete and the final result is a home filled with personality and Californian charm. ‘We’re still changing and rearranging little things here and there, because Dutch just can’t keep still,’ laughs Nancy. ‘But the house is very comfortable and suits our new lives perfectly.’ 25

GUEST BEDROOM

This fresh, nautical-themed room is reserved for the couple’s visiting daughter and granddaughter. Serene Nice bed, £270, Archers, would suit this space. For custom-made patchwork quilts try Demerara’s Quilts



BATHROOM

Flowers add colour and life to the white marble-clad scheme. Clearwater Avantgarde Back To Wall freestanding bath, £849, Sanctuary Bathrooms, is similar

POOLSIDE CHALET

'This has a self-contained kitchen, making it independent of the main house,' says Ceril.

The Monaco natural all-weather rattan corner sofa set, £999, Next, is a match. Plain pastel cushions, £9 each, B&Q. Find similar bunting, £12.95, at Dotcomgiftshop



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached

cladded house, built in the 1960s

LOCATION Isle of Wight

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, snug, five bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom, shower room, poolside chalets

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before living here, I had a small coastguard cottage as a weekend retreat,' says Ceril.

GLOBAL VIBE

A host of design ideas gleaned from stylist Ceril Campbell's travels around the world have influenced her chic seaside home

FEATURE SALLY GILLAM | PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE



Stylist Ceril Campbell has lent a dash of glamour to some of the world's most famous people, from royalty to rock stars, so it's hardly surprising that her striking house on the Isle of Wight oozes

sophistication and elegance, too.

Ceril, who has two grown-up children, Bella and Rory, says, 'After my divorce, I decided it was time for a life change, so I bought a tiny coastguard cottage on the island for weekends, just to dip my toe in the water.'

After spending years jetting around the world on advertising campaigns and fashion shoots, Ceril has recently become something of a homebird, forging a career in interior styling and property renovations. But as well as transforming

DESIGN TIP *'I've dressed celebrities for over 25 years, and many of the same rules apply to interiors – it's all about drawing the eye to the good bits'*

other people's home, she's changed her own life, too, realising a long-held dream to make the Isle of Wight her main home. 'I used to come here as a little girl, then, when I had my own children, we enjoyed family holidays on the island,' she says. 'I've always loved the place, but never imagined I'd be lucky enough to live here – just three minutes from the sea.'

Alternating between the cottage and her flat in central London, Ceril soon decided the Isle of Wight was where she wanted her permanent home to be, so she started looking for a bigger property. 'I wanted to live in a residential area, near friends,' she explains. 'So I focused on the most eastern tip of the island, which is surrounded by beautiful beaches, countryside and a harbour. My other big consideration was that I wanted a place that would work well for entertaining and accommodating friends and family, but would also be cosy enough for quieter time by myself.'

Fortunately, the 1960s build that she found four years ago has exactly the relaxed and homely feel she craved. It started life as a small



KITCHEN-DINER
This open-plan space mixes modern hi-gloss units and stainless steel appliances with industrial and farmhouse furniture. Units in gloss cream with integrated handles and Hanex acrylic Solid Surface worktop, from £2,000, Howdens



DINING AREA
Mix-and-match chairs add informality. Calia extending table, £750, John Lewis. Find rise-and-fall pulley pendant lights at The Lighting Company, from £144



SITTING ROOM
This space encapsulates Ceril's style – mostly white walls with colourful artwork and accessories. Modular sofa, £585, Nabru. For information on Ceril's home styling, visit cerilcampbell.com



SNUG

One wall is covered in framed vintage sheet music, while the facing wall is adorned with Chinese advertising prints and family photos.

Black frames, from £2, Dunelm. A similar sofa is the Halo Earle medium leather Chesterfield, £1,899, John Lewis. Heart of House Sherbourne striped large footstool, £180, Argos, is comparable



HALL

The impressive central oak staircase leads to a first-floor galleried landing.

A near-identical runner is Bay View stripe finished with a wool whipped edge, £129, Stair Runners Direct

bungalow, built by the original owner. The second owners, from whom Ceril bought the property, extended in several directions and added the poolside chalets. 'I loved what they had created and knew instantly I could stamp my own style on the place,' she explains.

Most of the work needed was cosmetic, apart from the bathrooms and kitchen. 'The house lacked a good-sized guest en suite, so I turned a bedroom into a bathroom that could be accessed from both the landing and main guest bedroom, via Jack and Jill doorways,' says Ceril. 'I also upgraded the master en suite to incorporate a wet room shower and freestanding bath, to give it some wow factor.'

The other main expense was redesigning and modernising the kitchen, and turning the poolside chalets into guest accommodation by

DESIGN ADVICE

'Always remember that you have to live in your home, so make it somewhere you and your family can just "be" and enjoy'

adding an indoor/outdoor kitchenette, and a shower cabin. It was a big job, but Ceril took it all in her stride and approached the project creatively. 'I was a perfectionist about the build and finish, but the interior styling is much more relaxed,' she says. 'As I come from a fashion background, it's instinctive for me to mix designer and high street. I like to put precious family heirlooms alongside budget buys, and pieces I've picked up from my travels around the world.'

And there is no shortage of places for her to seek more treasured items for her home. 'I have to confess, I'm the car boot queen,' says Ceril. 'The St Helens Sunday sale in the next village is a must. I also love looking for bargains in charity shops, auctions and the local TK Maxx.'

The end result is a relaxed home with a touch of luxury, a global vibe and plenty of vibrant colour thanks to artwork and fabrics. 'It's a place where I love to spend time,' says Ceril. 'Making a big move takes a little courage, but in my case, it has really paid off.' 25

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS **GO TO PAGE 141**

CHALET BEDROOM

This tropical, colonial scheme was inspired by Balinese artwork that Ceril bought on her travels.

Julian Bowen Paris white double bed frame, £119, The Bed Frame Shop.
Four-drawer storage unit, £35, Matalan



MASTER BEDROOM

'The vintage Chinese rug is upside down, as I preferred the back,' says Ceril.

The pink and blue Nomadic Peacock Wool Plantation rug, is similar, from £225, Flooring Warehouse Direct



MASTER EN SUITE

A walk-in shower was created by using space from an adjoining bedroom.

Tongue-and-groove panelling painted in Dulux Diamond eggshell, £33 for 5 litres, The Paint Shed



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PAST PERFECT

Katja Ullrich-North and her husband Justin carefully rebuilt their period home, adding a dash of retro cool into the mix

FEATURE EMMA J PAGE | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



REPLANNED

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Victorian terrace

LOCATION North London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, cloakroom, four bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a garden flat nearby,' says Katja.

KITCHEN
Sliding doors and a set of skylights channel plenty of light into this bright, family-friendly space.

Units, price on application, Poggenpohl. Swing AV bar stools, £166 each, Protocol. Salvaged oak dining table, £3,800, Jonathan Field



SITTING ROOM

Hugo and Sandrine's toys are neatly stashed away in the low-level storage unit.

Frame bench, £1,440, James Tattersal. For a Fritz Hansen Alphabet sofa, from £4,168, try Aram. Buy a Fritz Hansen Minuscule armchair, £1,098, from Nest



Katja Ullrich-North and her husband Justin were fully aware that the home they had just bought needed lots of work doing to it, but before long they began to wonder if they had overreached themselves. 'It was a world away from our initial idea of a place that was ready to move into,' says Katja. 'But finding the right property was so tricky that we became open to the possibility of a renovation project.'

After losing out on several houses in sealed bids, Katja and Justin spotted a place for sale

FAVOURITE SHOP

*'We really like
Twentytwentyone's
blend of stylish yet
practical pieces. There's
some fun furniture
and accessories for
children, too'*



SITTING ROOM

The couple were keen to reinstate period details here, such as the Victorian fireplace and plasterwork.

Find Fritz Hansen PK22 limited edition lounge chairs at Twentytwentyone, £2,552 each. Louis Poulsen PH Snowball pendant lamp, £1,510, Skandium



opposite one they had narrowly missed. Divided into bedsits, the building, in north London, had been left untouched for years, and the couple didn't even have the chance to do a full viewing before putting in an offer. 'We already knew the layout and proportions of the houses on this road very well, so we felt confident,' says Katja.

But it turned out that the terraced house needed more than just a gentle overhaul. 'When we saw the property we'd just bought reduced to little more than

structural beams on a bare plot of land, we began to question whether we'd done the right thing. Fortunately, the Australian-born pair, who are parents to Hugo, now 3, and Sandrine, 8 months, were able to live in their nearby flat during the renovation.

As the building's Victorian features had long since been removed, it was agreed that starting again would be a more efficient approach than remedial work. 'We were still keen to reinstate the period details,' explains Katja, 'and we rebuilt with that in mind,

carefully sourcing ceiling roses, dados, cornicing, architraves and fireplaces that were appropriate to the age of the house.'

The couple extended the original footprint to create a larger kitchen with dining area and direct garden access. 'In Australia, open-plan living, featuring bright, sociable spaces, is the norm and we wanted to replicate that feeling,' says Katja. Subtle changes made all the difference; the floors were dropped throughout, allowing more space in the third storey, where the children's



MASTER BEDROOM

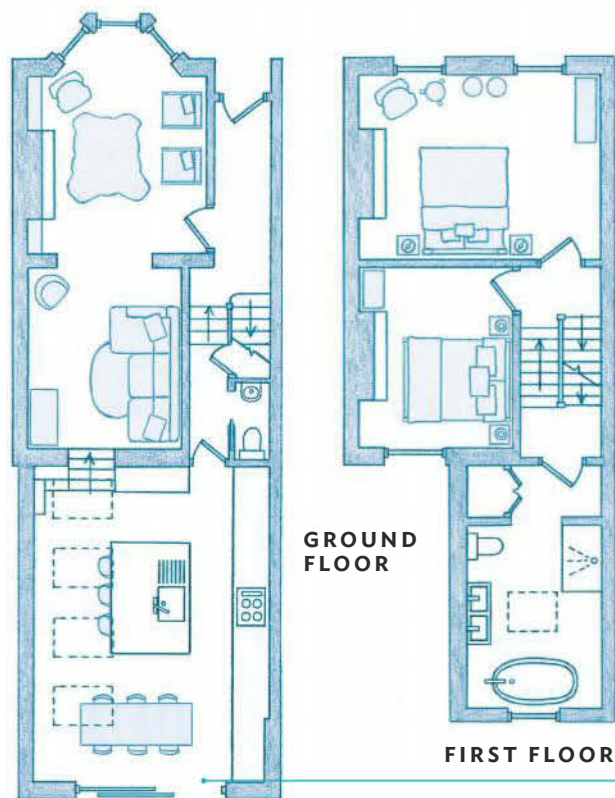
'We lived with a neutral scheme for a while, before introducing colour and pattern,' says Katja. Artifort Little Tulip chair, £712, Shop Goodmood. Vitra Visiona stool, £385, Coexistence



BATHROOM

'The bath came before the house,' says Katja, 'and it was a challenge fitting it in.' Artelinea 2 drawer sink unit, £1,872, CP Hart. Thonet 209 chair, £890, Shop Goodmood

AFTER



GROUND FLOOR

FIRST FLOOR

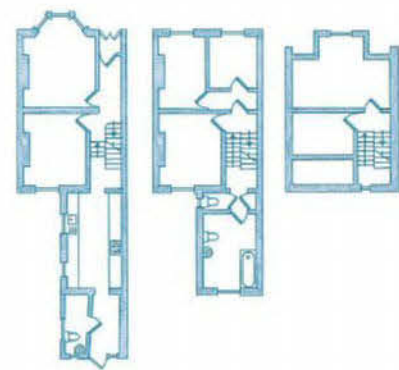
SECOND FLOOR

KITCHEN-DINER

Extending outwards and sideways enabled Katja and Justin to create a spacious kitchen-diner, perfect for family life and entertaining. The new and improved layout also accesses the garden and adjoining sitting room.



BEFORE



bedrooms are located. On the first floor, three bedrooms were turned into two and a family bathroom was reinstated.

It was a chance meeting with interiors specialist Camilo Torres that helped the family add the finishing touches to their home. 'We've always had a soft spot for Scandinavian design with a 1950s touch,' says Katja. 'Camilo shared our interest and

suggested softening the all-white scheme by adding subtle colour, such as a pale green feature wall in the kitchen and papering the chimney breast in the master bedroom.

He also introduced wow factor by sourcing iconic pieces for the pair, including a Fritz Hansen Alphabet sofa and PK22 lounge chairs, and Louis Poulsen pendants. 'Camilo understood that we wanted this to

be a real family home, but with grown-up spaces, too,' says Katja. Unsurprisingly, they spend most of the time in their multifunctional kitchen, where Justin loves to cook.

And have they injected an Antipodean sensibility into this Victorian classic? 'I think we have,' says Katja. 'It's great to return the house to its period roots, but even better to have brought the sunshine in.' 25



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INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Grade II listed detached Georgian country house

LOCATION Hertfordshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, drawing room, kitchen, library, utility room, playroom, boot room, cloakroom, seven bedrooms, three bathrooms

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a Victorian townhouse in north London,' says Charlotte.

LIFE & SOUL

Charlotte and Grant Clemence knew their run-down home had the potential to be an ideal place to entertain

FEATURE VICTORIA TUNSTALL | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

Charlotte and Grant Clemence's grand Hertfordshire home is a constant hive of activity. When she's not busy working from home, Charlotte is looking after her daughter Sophia, now 3, and selling her homemade juice and honey. So it's no small feat that, on top of all this, she has also found the time to oversee

the renovation of their previously rundown seven-bedroom Grade II listed Georgian house.

In 2011, the couple decided to move out of their Victorian townhouse in London to a village in the country. 'I wanted Sophia to have the same idyllic upbringing that I had,' explains Charlotte, and when she found this property online, there was no turning back. 'As soon as I stepped



KITCHEN

This well-designed space offers beautiful views of the garden when you're sat at the table.

Table and chairs, £1,700, UK Architectural Antiques. Silver pendant lights, £200 each, Original BTC. Gloss laminate Taurus Black worktop, £80 for L300cm, Wickes, is near-identical to this one



SITTING ROOM

A grey palette provides a great backdrop for the bold prints and vibrant furnishings. Swirl by Paul Smith rug, £935sq m, The Rug Company. Corner sofa upholstered in crushed grey velvet, £1,600, Modelli Fabrics. For Marilyn Monroe prints by Andy Warhol try Art Republic, from £49 each



LIBRARY
Wooden panelling complements the age of the house. Ex Libris Fornasetti wallpaper, £101 per roll, Designer Wallpapers. Chairs restored by Charlotte, £2,000





MASTER BEDROOM

Subtle blue touches create a peaceful feel.

Gold Valentine chandelier, £350, Bhs. Louis French bed in cloud blue, £1,345, Loaf, is a match. Lady Valet mannequin, £199, John Lewis, would work here

INSPIRATION
'I've decorated in a French château style as I wanted to keep the charm and character of the property, but also give it a modern edge'

through the door, I sensed a warm atmosphere.' Grant was less convinced about the place – until I pointed out he could have a wine cellar in the basement and keep bees in the grounds.

Their new home needed urgent attention as damp had set in, the woodwork was rotten and the interior was dated. 'It was all peach and swags,' says Charlotte. 'I wanted to restore the house's original character, while giving it my own stamp.'

As Charlotte was heavily pregnant when they moved in, she began by decorating the nursery in soft neutrals and creams. 'The whole space was white – had I known how messy children can be, I might have realised it wasn't practical,' she laughs.

More problems occurred when the Aga caught fire, resulting in the couple having to completely renovate the kitchen. 'We knew it was going to be expensive, so were reluctant to throw out the handmade units that were already there,' says Charlotte. 'Instead, we commissioned a carpenter to replicate the design and build some

more – a fresh coat of paint gave the room a whole new look at a fraction of the cost.'

For the sitting room, Charlotte wanted a cosy space as this is where the family spend most evenings. The walls were painted dark grey and the floorboards were restored. She then stripped layers of paint off the fireplace, and although the plan was to revive it, the couple changed their minds. 'We loved the way it looked, so we decided to leave it distressed,' she says. Bright accessories, a vibrant rug and bold prints completed the look.

Once the bare bones were complete, Charlotte could use her home to try out design ideas. 'I'm forever changing things around, which drives Grant mad,' she says. 'I've spent my life thinking about interior design, so it's a dream come true to be doing it professionally now.'

Meanwhile, the house has come into its own for parties. The couple host a charity event for East Anglia's Children's Hospices every summer. 'We love a get together, and it's the perfect place.' **25**



BATHROOM

An upcycled vintage chair is a comfortable place to perch. Chair upholstered in Kojda fabric, £225m, Missoni Home. Marie Therese chandelier, £152, Wayfair



GUEST BEDROOM

The large silk scarf cushion from Charlotte's own collection adds an opulent touch. Cushion, £95, Charlotte Clemence (charlotteclemence.com). Try Julian Bowen Empress bed, £360, Wayfair. Fabrics & Papers is a good place to source toile de Jouy fabric, from £57.50m. Burford lamp, £232, Jim Lawrence, suits this style



GUEST BEDROOM

Matching fabrics lend a uniform look. Primrose bed is an alternative, £1,299, House of Fraser. Leila duck egg bedspread, from £225, Laura Ashley, is near-identical



SOPHIA'S ROOM

For a contemporary touch, a stylish chair and footstool has been used in this space. Mies van der Rohe Barcelona chair, £450; and ottoman, £199, both Vita Interiors. Walls painted in Wimborne White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

Insight

RENOVATING A LISTED BUILDING

If you've fallen for a listed property, like Charlotte and Grant Clemence did, consider these points first

Renovating a listed building is not for the faint-hearted. A listed status means that even small changes to your home can be subject to special consents. However, if you work closely with Historic England (formerly English Heritage) and your local planning office, as well as taking plenty of advice from the experts, the results can be rewarding.

On the list

Homes of historic and architectural interest are often listed to protect their status and there are currently around half a million properties on the register. Listing, which covers a whole building, both inside and out, is important because it ensures that great buildings from the past survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

There are different types of listings – by far the largest number of listed properties, including most private homes, fall into the Grade II category and major alterations are subject to the consent of the local planning authority. Grade II* is a status given to finer houses, more often with intact interiors, and planning decisions on these are made by the local authority under Historic England guidance. Grade I status is for buildings of the finest quality that have survived with few alterations, or with modifications that are as good in their own way as the original. Few, if any, changes other than

careful repairs and updating services are likely to be permitted.

Bear in mind

In a listed property, common works requiring consent might include the replacement of windows or doors, knocking down internal walls, painting over brickwork or altering fireplaces. You'll need to apply for listed building consent and you can download an application form from your local authority's website or seek guidance from the government's planning portal (planningportal.gov.uk). Minor alterations such as kitchen and bathroom updates will not normally require planning permission or Listed Building Consent, unless it involves demolition of any kind.

Taking on a building like this can be daunting, but remember that many of the problems associated with older properties stem from a lack of routine maintenance. Make sure gutters and drains are clear, flashings to chimneys are secure and that earth isn't too high against external walls.

Although there is a temptation to push on quickly, take the time to ensure all the details and specifications are correct. Taking advice and care over the choice of builder, and consulting a specialist will pay dividends in the long term. Finally, remember that listed buildings are protected by law. Unauthorised changes can carry criminal sanctions, so if in doubt, seek advice.

EXPERT EYE *'Success comes when you work with the local planning authority and Historic England. We start by consulting experts in the relevant architectural period, talking to The Listed Property Owners Club about the grants available and the reduced rates of VAT prevailing, as well as permissible changes in similar properties'*

MARK RIESE, URBAN LIVING INTERIORS



PROFESSIONAL ADVICE



'Think repair rather than renovation. Learn to love quirks and imperfections. Avoid the temptation to renew. Elements such as original crown window glass and old stairs and floorboards should be retained where possible.'

The Old House Eco Handbook by Roger Hunt and Marianne Suhr is a user-friendly fount of advice. It describes good conservation practice and outlines compatible methods for making your listed building more eco-friendly and fuel-efficient.

Use a builder with the right experience. A good test is to ask them about their approach to lime mortar. If they reject it as wrong, expensive or old-fashioned, reject them. The vast majority of pre-1930s buildings rely to a greater or lesser extent on the use of lime. Also avoid injected damp-proof courses, Portland cement, anything artificial and uPVC.

Try to visit the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum (wealddown.co.uk), which is a museum of rescued historic buildings. Organisations such as the Landmark Trust (landmarktrust.org.uk) carry out exemplary renovations of mainly modest older buildings and hold regular open days.'

MICHAEL PHILLIPS, PHILLIPS TRACEY ARCHITECTS

ADDRESS BOOK

■ **Historic England** 0370 333 0607, historicengland.org.uk

The public body that looks after England's historic environment.

■ **The Royal Institute of British Architects** 020 7580 5533, architecture.com

Consult the Conservation Register to find architects with specific heritage skills.

■ **Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings** 020 7377 1644, spab.org.uk

Find advice here on every aspect of repairing old buildings.



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TRUE BLUE

When Laura Stafford-Deitsch had her home redesigned, she remained loyal to her favourite colour

FEATURE MAGGIE COLVIN | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Maisonette in a Victorian terrace

LOCATION West London

ROOMS Sitting/dining room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, I lived nearby with my parents,' says Laura.

SITTING ROOM

Choosing a cohesive colour scheme and keeping the decor light creates a feeling of space and flow.

Lara velvet ottoman, £575; Trevarno mirror, £185, both Oka. Bluebell sofa, from £1,240, Sofa.com. Pjätteryd canvas, £25, Ikea. Caribbean Days Nevis wool carpet, £36.50m, Kersaint Cobb



DINING ROOM

The chairs are stackable, which lends more space to this crisp, fresh scheme. Firenze white painted dining table with pine top, £350; Tavern dining chairs, £49 each, both John Lewis. Striped plates, £7 each; cutlery, £4 per piece, both Zara Home. Fish-embossed jug, £15, Joanna Wood. Clock, £45, The Labrador Company



Getting onto the property ladder can be challenging, and that was certainly the case for Laura Stafford-Deutsch. 'I fell in love with several flats but none of them were quite right,'

she says. She was almost at the point of giving up when she found a Victorian maisonette in her price range. 'The prospect of my own home on two floors sounded too good to be true,' Laura says, recalling her delight when she saw the property. 'I couldn't believe my eyes. It had a private entrance, high ceilings and a spiral staircase leading to a bedroom and bathroom. It was like a little house for the price of a flat.'

However, there was a drawback. 'The kitchen was tiny, with not enough cupboard space and no dishwasher,' explains Laura. 'I knew I'd be able to replace the laminate units, which were falling apart, but I wasn't sure how I could magic more space out of thin air.' Enter interior designer Jo Thorp of Thorp & May. 'I was so blessed to have her,' says Laura. 'It only took her an afternoon to work out how to transform my kitchen.'

Jo suggested the top cupboards should be extended to the ceiling and the oven placed above the fridge. Next, she worked out how to fit the washing machine and dryer into the upstairs bathroom. 'Her final stroke of brilliance was persuading me to invest in a dishwasher drawer, which is brilliant,' explains Laura. 'It takes up half the space and left room for a deep cabinet below.'

The wood worktop was swapped for a smart black granite one, creating a chic monochrome scheme. 'It was Chanel-inspired, as I love classic fashion, films and design,' says Laura. 'I've been a fan of Audrey Hepburn since I was small, so the flat also features iconic black-and-white images of her that I hope echo the graphic look of the kitchen.'

Falling in love with a blue-and-white fabric was the second biggest influence on Laura's interiors scheme. 'Having chosen the palette, I then found myself collecting matching accessories and furniture,' she says. 'Once your mind's made up, you end up seeing that colour combination everywhere.' After the bathroom was given a makeover with a new paint scheme, shower and basin, the bedroom was refreshed with a coat of paint and a blue-and-white quilt.

'Living in a small space is all about being adaptable,' says Laura. 'My dressing table doubles up as a desk, the dining chairs can be stacked, and mirrors add light.' It's a formula that has worked. 'With a little ingenuity, we've been able to navigate the drawbacks,' says Laura. 'I can't imagine living anywhere else.'



DECORATING ADVICE *'A blue-and-white palette is a timeless colour combination that always looks crisp and fresh'*



BATHROOM

A soft green paint replaced Laura's original choice of bright turquoise.

Walls painted in Stepping Stone matt emulsion, £20 for 2.5 litres, Crown. Beta basin, £22, Bathstore



BEDROOM

The headboard colour is echoed by pearl grey tones in the bedside chests.

Walls painted in Slipper Satin estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Delphine Blue quilt, £225; table, £320, both Pilgrimage Interiors



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JUST AS GOOD

After moving from a house they adored, Karen and Jason Burrows set out to create a new home that lived up to their last one

FEATURE MAGGIE COLVIN | PHOTOGRAPHY TONY TIMMINGTON

KITCHEN-DINER

'To create clear zones for cooking and eating, we decided to keep the original tiled floor in the kitchen area and install wooden flooring in the dining area,' explains Karen.

Tablecloth, from £25, Cath Kidston. Units painted in Lime White estate eggshell, £55 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Dorchester ladderback chairs, £90 each, The Cotswold Company, are comparable. The Furniture Shop UK's cream fayence bench seat, £431, is similar to this one





DRAWING ROOM

Local company **Decorative Country Living**, encouraged Karen to revamp her furniture.

Dining chair painted in Paris Grey chalk paint, £18.95 for 1 litre, Annie Sloan. Brooks sofa, £1,870, Oka, would suit this look

After Karen Burrows' husband Jason was offered a job that meant relocating from busy London to leafy Lincolnshire, she had certain misgivings about moving out of the home they had grown to love. 'I was sorry to have to leave behind our Georgian cottage in London,' she says. 'It was such a lovely building.'

So the search was on to find a period property that would live up to the standard of their former home. They found themselves wandering around many low-ceilinged and dark-beamed properties, before eventually finding a place suitable for the family, including their children, Finlay, now 15, and Grace, 13.

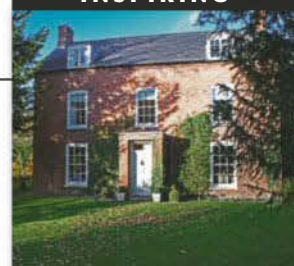
The house had been owned by a couple who had not touched it for almost 40 years, so it needed modernising. However, the property also had many attractions – a 1.5-acre garden,

an orchard, two stables, a swimming pool and square Georgian rooms with tall sash windows.

'It was structurally sound, which was good news, but we also faced many challenges that we had to overcome,' explains Karen. These included 23 old-fashioned radiators, woodchip walls, a stone fireplace that jarred with its surroundings, two bathroom suites in yellow and avocado, and a distinct lack of furniture. What little the couple brought with them was soon swallowed up. 'I remember the removal people setting down our last chair with a quizzical look on their faces because the place looked so sparse,' recalls Karen. But undeterred, the couple began their renovations.

As well as steaming woodchip paper off the walls before painting them, Karen and Jason replaced the fireplace with a Georgian design found at a reclamation yard. Next to go was the

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Grade II listed Georgian house

LOCATION Lincolnshire

ROOMS Hall, drawing room, sitting room/kitchen-diner, study, cloakroom, six bedrooms, two bathrooms

POUCHED 2000

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before here, we lived in a Georgian cottage in London,' says Karen.



GUEST BEDROOM
Karen found the French-style bed at a local auction. Provençal sassy white bed, £1,365, The French Bedroom Company, has this look



BATHROOM
The elegant roll-top has become a focal point feature in the middle of the room. Astonian Luxor Victorian bath, £1,345, Aston Matthews; painted in Turquoise Blue intelligent eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene

1980s glass door between the hall and dining room, which was replaced by a traditional design, while door fittings were substituted with cottage latches or period handles.

Both lovers of French country furniture, the pair searched high and low for worthy items. Fortunately a local supplier provided them with plenty of scope and inspired them to start painting their own pieces to create a lighter, more lived-in look. But the most significant change has been the removal of the wall between the kitchen and the dining room,

which has created a spacious sitting room/kitchen-diner. 'It was tricky as we had to wait for planning permission and move the Aga,' says Karen. 'But we can now seat 16 people for dinner and we spend most of our time here. The children do their homework at one end of the table while I'm busy baking at the other.'

Life in Lincolnshire, with its blue skies and wide open spaces has proved a huge success for the family. 'Our lives have changed quite a bit since moving here,' says Karen. 'But now I believe it's the best thing we could have done.' 25

DESIGN TIP
'Panelled cupboard doors can be removed and replaced with chicken wire, and then backed with a pretty fabric for a feminine country look'



MASTER BEDROOM
Floral fabrics complement the style of the house. Constance fabric, £65m, Cabbages & Roses. Walls painted in Margaret Rose matt emulsion, £35.50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Allegra wall light in brass, £80, The Lighting Company, is a match

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Hand-painted in Regency Grey with an intricate trim, the Camille chest of drawers, £349, is the perfect bedroom accessory



Upholstered in Oatmeal linen, the 19th-century style Celine bench, £229, would look at home at the foot of a bed



With a mango wood frame and herringbone wool upholstery, the Rouen stool in Olive, £169, has an elegant look



Inject a touch of French luxury into your room with the solid mango wood Lille armchair, £329, in Dark Grape velvet

SWOON
EDITIONS

TERMS AND CONDITIONS Save £20 on a £200 minimum spend. Prices shown are accurate at time of going to print. Cannot be used alongside any other offers or promotions – ends at midnight on 6 August 2015.



KITCHEN
As the couple are both tall, the floor units are 3cm higher than standard. Joinery, £15,700; quartz worktops, £4,584, Bath Kitchen Company. Ava green bar stools, £80 each, Atlantic Shopping



FAMILY ROOM
'Buying our furniture bespoke from local suppliers meant it was better quality and not much more expensive than ready-made pieces,' says Rebecca.
Sofas and footstool, £3,400, Bath Sofa & Curtain Company. Lack side table, £5; Jära lampshade, £7.50; Umfors table lampshade, £9, all Ikea

THE REAL DEAL

Neutral tones, vibrant fabrics and traditional furniture give an authentic feel to Rebecca and Steven Hourston's period home

FEATURE VICTORIA JENKINS | PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM GODDARD



SITTING ROOM
Rebecca wanted warm, earthy tones for a relaxing feel in here.
Sofas from £1,600 each, Bath Sofa & Curtain Company. Candy Bean large rug in Autumn, £270; Chenille Diamonds and Chenille Stripe cushions, £10 each; Santiago Washed Urn table lamps, £40 each, all Dunelm

REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached 1920s house

LOCATION Bath

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen/family room, breakfast area, play room, utility room, cloakroom, larder, four bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms. Separate coach house annexe in garden

PURCHASED 2013

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here we had a five-bedroom terrace in southwest London,' says Rebecca.

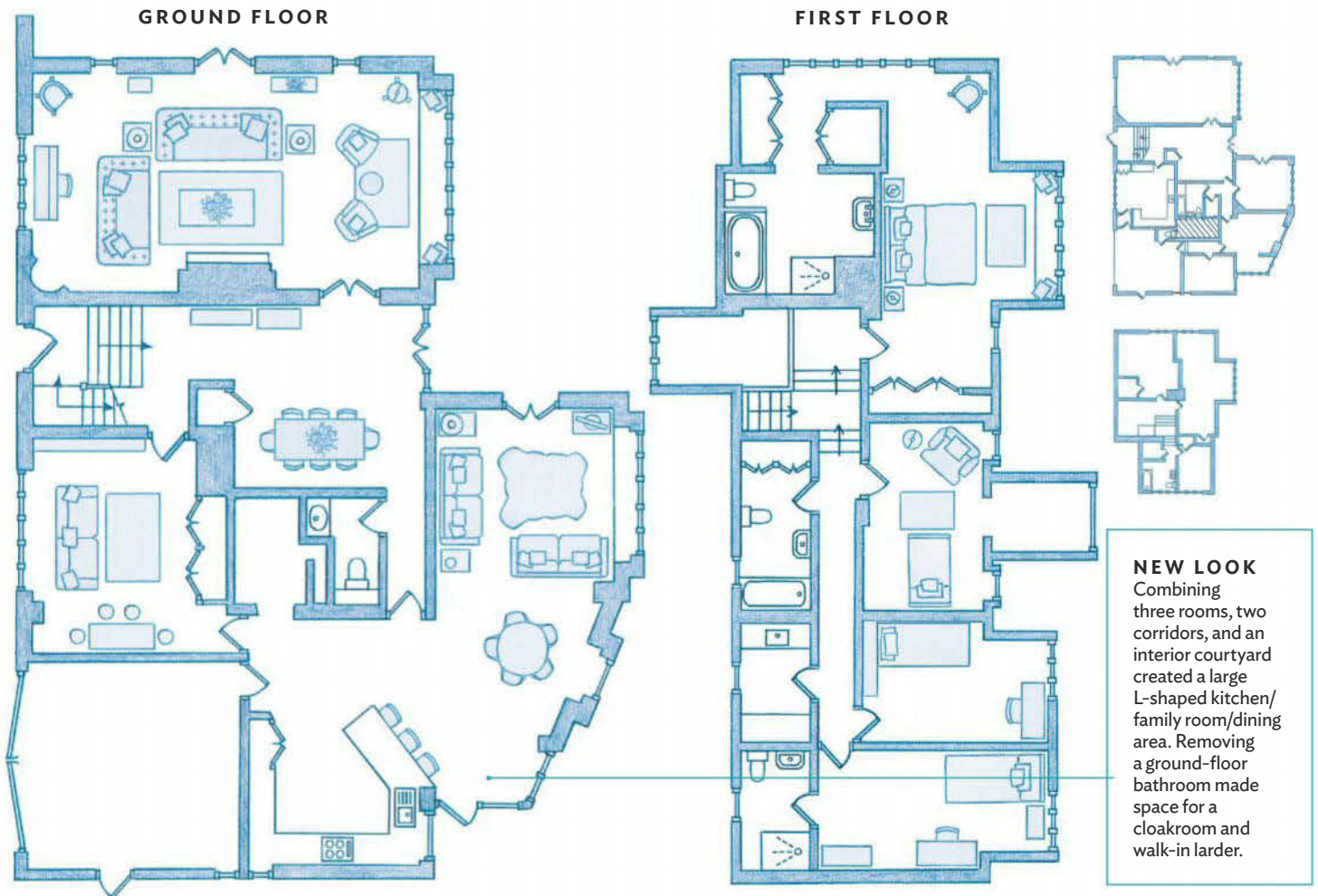
BREAKFAST AREA
Apple green for fabrics and seating gives a fresh look, and reflects the garden.

Circle oak dining table, £1,520, Adventures in Furniture. Cushioned Eames-style green dining chairs, £65 each, Atlantic Shopping. Dandelion Puff blinds, £78m, Fabrics & Papers. Large green cut-out pendant light, £22, Dove Mill



AFTER

BEFORE



Moving from London to Bath was a big but necessary step for Rebecca and Steven Hourston. 'We wanted more space and a quieter life for our sons Callum, 8, Jamie, 6, and Alex, 2,' says Rebecca.

They found their large detached 1920s house through friends of friends and Rebecca was charmed by it from the first viewing. 'There was a wonderful jangly brass bell at the door, then steps down into a spacious hall that led all the way through to the back garden – which was an explosion of colour,' says Rebecca. 'The outdoors was on two levels, with amazing views across Bath, and we could hardly believe the fantastic contrast with our London terrace.'

Some of the large light-filled rooms were panelled, and the house had many other original features. To the Hourstons' delight, it had everything on their wish list, including separate study space and even proximity to a swimming pool. 'There was an old

coach house in the garden and it's where we have our offices,' says Rebecca.

When planning how to rework the layout, the couple wasted no time. 'Instead of living there at first, we applied for and received planning permission before we'd even bought it,' says Rebecca. 'With three boys, we didn't want to wait. We planned a two-bedroom extension above the single-storey west end of the house, and our architect persuaded us to knock three rooms, two corridors and an internal courtyard into one big kitchen-diner/sitting area. We also reconfigured two more rooms to create our master en suite. At one point, the house was just a gutted shell with a pile of rubble in it.'

During the work, the family lived in the coach house, which had a bathroom and kitchenette. 'The building took seven months and the finishing another year,' says Rebecca. 'This included a new kitchen, installing built-in storage, and then the painting.'

'Our policy was to spend on the kitchen and the flooring and save on furniture and

finishing touches,' she continues. 'We reused as many period fittings as possible such as the panelling, round wooden doorknobs and a 1920s washbasin. Keeping the character was very important – but we did commit heresy by giving the Aga to my parents and buying double ovens and an induction hob instead.'

Fitting new ovens wasn't the only concession to modern living. The house also had to be rewired, replastered, and new doors and windows were installed. 'We were disappointed at having to replace the original folding garden doors, but they were rotten,' says Rebecca. 'And although we'd wanted to sand and polish the original pine flooring in the hall and lounge, we were so pleased with the new engineered oak in the kitchen, we carried it on through the whole ground floor.'

Now the family are settled, they couldn't be happier to have made the move to the country. 'We love living here, especially the boys,' says Rebecca. 'When we first arrived, they didn't know how to climb the apple tree in the garden – but now, we can't stop them.'



JAMIE'S BEDROOM
The den in the eaves is accessed by wooden block steps. Bespoke bunk bed and steps, Kingman Joinery. Canvas storage cubes, £17 each, Great Little Trading Company

INSPIRATION 'We made a mood board using interior websites and interiors magazines to inspire our thinking'



PLAYROOM
A magnetic plaster wall is a clever way to exhibit the boys' drawings. Thistle magnetic plaster, £96.99 for a 2.5kg bag, Wickes. Tåstrup rug, £35, Ikea



ALEX'S BEDROOM
This bespoke triangular window was the ideal solution for an awkward space. Walls painted in Khaki Mists 4 paint mixing silk, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux. Anna toddler bedstead, £120, John Lewis



MASTER BEDROOM
The couple moved back the wall behind the bed and an exterior wall beneath the eaves to create an illusion of space. Mirror, £9, The Range. Walls painted in Slipper Satin estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



BATHROOM
Stone finishes add a touch of luxury. Ecru tumbled marble flooring, £55sq m; wall tiles, £45.60sq m; walnut tumbled travertine mosaic tiles, £102.55sq m, all Mandarin Stone



HALL
Original features
abound as you enter.
For a kilim rug, from
£120, try Myakka

FRESH START

Claire Carter and her two sons swapped rural living for a vibrant city, and found a fun place to enjoy the next chapters of their lives

FEATURE MAIRI MACDONALD | PHOTOGRAPHY DOUGLAS GIBB



DRAWING ROOM
Black accents add contrast and depth to this chic pale scheme. Sofas re-covered in Kames Violet, £105/in m, Bute Fabrics. Drum table, £500, B&B Italia. Walls painted in Wimborne White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



SITTING ROOM
This attractive formal dining table also doubles as Claire's work desk. Antique table, around £4,000; rustic mirror, from £600; Station Master's clock, £1,200; copper Cairene tray, around £200, all That Wow Thing! Stockholm chairs, £100 each, Ikea

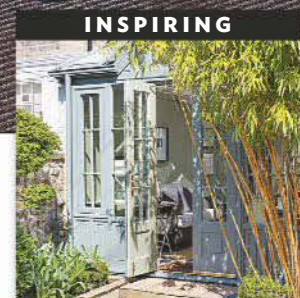


Moving house can be a very stressful time, so when Claire Carter was looking to move out of the family home just outside Edinburgh, after separating from her husband, she employed the services of house hunter Sheona Gordon. 'With two teenage sons, Tim (now 25) and Mike (23), and having to hold down a new job in Glasgow, I just didn't have the time to search for somewhere to live,' says Claire.

Knowing the market as she did, Sheona was able to preview suitable properties, filter them down to two or three and show them to Claire and the boys. Soon Sheona hit the

jackpot with a five-bedroom townhouse set over four floors and just 15 minutes walk from Tim and Mike's school and five minutes away from Edinburgh train station and the city centre. Another bonus was the that house was renovated to a high specification, so the Carters could move in immediately. 'I was so excited that I offered the seller the asking amount there and then,' says Claire, 'on condition that the boys were happy, too. Fortunately, they liked it as much as I did.'

Having moved in, Claire decided that the decor was more metropolitan New York than downtown Edinburgh, so she made plans for a slight redesign. 'Black-and-white



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Georgian townhouse

LOCATION Edinburgh

ROOMS Hall, drawing room, sitting room, kitchen-diner, sunroom, five bedrooms (two en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2006

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before this place, we lived in a Victorian house outside Edinburgh,' says Claire.



SUNROOM

This bright area is Claire's favourite spot to read or relax with a friend.

Interior painted in Lichen estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Round white table, £155, Unto This Last

1 KITCHEN

The units came with the house, and Claire refreshed the look with white walls.

Wood-effect grey floor tiles, £39.20sq m, Walls and Floors. Tom Dixon Bead wide white metal pendant light, £285, Heal's

2 DINING AREA

A beautiful vintage table takes centre stage in this modern, laid-back setting.

For a similar table circa 1740 try That Wow Thing!, from £1,000. Esbjörn chair, £70, Ikea

wallpaper in the master bedroom and gold in the drawing room created a stunning effect, but it was too much for my taste,' says Claire. 'So I asked my interior designer friend Marnie Conley to make some decorative changes. She has impeccable taste – her homes always look classic, informal, comfortable and not obviously styled. I wanted to get away from the high-end look that we'd inherited from the previous owners and

turn it into a relaxed home for the boys and me.' Working with the furniture, paintings and accessories that Claire had brought with her, Marnie set about softening the interior. Walls were repainted in easy off-whites or calming neutrals, sisal flooring replaced deep-pile carpets, and furniture was chosen or reupholstered to suit each space.

'Before long, our home became a haven for us all,' says Claire. 'My sons' friends





would pile into our house after school for tea and toast, and Marnie designed a playroom with floppy sofas and a large television next to the kitchen. We also had plenty of space for parties in the basement, where the music wouldn't disturb anyone.' However, as they grew up and eventually moved out, the house has been gently altered and adapted to suit Claire's needs. The boys' playroom is now a comfortable sitting room where she works

or watches TV, and when they return for Christmas or holidays they're happy to hang out in the spacious kitchen-diner.

'What's wonderful is how this house has grown with us,' reflects Claire. 'It has evolved and changed just as we have. I love it when my sons are home and the house is full, but equally I enjoy it when I'm on my own and it's quiet. This house has become so much more than I ever expected.'

3 BATHROOM

The roll-top bath has been painted black to tie in with the monochrome theme.

Falmouth is a similar tub (unpainted), £645, The Cast Iron Bath Company. Black and white tiles, £26.45sq m, Walls and Floors

4 GUEST BEDROOM

This scheme has a masculine feel, ideal for either of Claire's visiting sons.

Walls painted in Tivoli absolute matt emulsion, £37 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene

MASTER BEDROOM

Marnie made the vibrant artwork above the bed by simply stapling Manuel Canovas fabric onto frames. Chairs reupholstered in Melusine acid green slubbed silk fabric, £42m, Fabrics & Papers. Walls painted in Parma Gray estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball





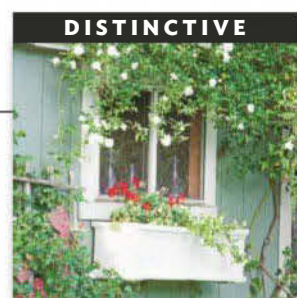
VERANDA
'I love to sit outside as often as I can, whatever the time of year,' says Kitty. Kettler Hera wicker armchair, £150, John Lewis, has this look



TRUE COLOURS

Kitty Bartholomew was destined to live in this pretty cottage, which she duly decorated in her signature vibrant style

FEATURE JANE BOWLES
PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN ELLIS/LIVING INSIDE



DISTINCTIVE

HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Detached Mid-Century cottage

LOCATION Ojai, California

ROOMS Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, studio, three bedrooms, two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before coming here, I was living in a rented house near Los Angeles,' says Kitty.



KITCHEN
Existing units were upcycled to go with Kitty's pieces. The Old Cinema stocks a range of antique dressers, from £495



DINING ROOM

Antique farmhouse-style furniture has a lived-in look. Sweetpea & Willow's Ritz refectory table, £641, and Wexford dresser, £767, would both work well. Alexander Paul Antiques sells similar rush-seated chairs, from £264 each



SITTING ROOM

Brightly coloured furniture and accessories help keep this space up to date. Ian Mankin's Suffolk check L Peony, £24.50m, is a good match for the chair fabric. Whitby basket weave mat, from £75, John Lewis, has the look of this one

Kitty Bartholomew was living in rented accommodation in a rural valley in California, when a trip to a local garage sale changed her life. 'I'm an avid upcycler and adore foraging for old furniture to restore and paint in my studio,' she says. 'So when I heard there was a sale nearby I went along, but was more interested in the house, which also happened to be for sale.'

When Kitty got home, she couldn't stop thinking about it. 'It was a truly lovely cottage, and I could totally see myself living there,' she says. 'I spent a sleepless night mentally arranging my furniture, and by morning I'd decided that I simply had to buy it.' Soon after, she made an offer for the property, which was accepted. 'Everything just fell into place like magic. I even decided to adopt the owner's cat, who by the strangest coincidence just happened to be called Miss Kitty!'

Happily, there was no structural work required, so Kitty, an interior designer, was free to devote all her energies to the interior. 'The cottage had last been refurbished in the 1980s, so I couldn't wait to update it,' she says. 'I wanted to give the kitchen a more open and informal feel, so I took down the wall cabinets, and replaced some of the base units with freestanding cupboards.' Kitty had sold most of her furniture when she left

DECORATING TIP *'Painting cabinets or fire surrounds black draws attention to the adjacent colours and makes them stand out more vividly, thus enhancing the sense of contrast'*

her previous home bar a few favourite pieces, including a distressed emerald green dresser. 'Two of the most amazing things in the cottage were the 1950s cooker and the painted wooden kitchen island, which I was lucky enough to buy with the property,' she says. 'They work perfectly with my dresser and could have been made for each other.'

Kitty drew on her many years of design experience to create a fun and vibrant decor. 'Red is one of my favourite colours as it's so warm and welcoming, and I've used it in all the main reception rooms,' she explains. Elsewhere pastel walls and pale blue ceilings provide a neutral backdrop for Kitty's eclectic mix of garage-sale and junk-shop finds. Pride of place is given to her collection of vintage wicker furniture, much of which she's repaired and repainted herself. 'Some were picked up for pennies and given a new lease of life with a simple lick of paint,' she adds. 'Designing on a budget can actually make you more creative, as it challenges your imagination.'

Another source of inspiration is English country house style. 'I've visited the UK many times and love the Cotswolds,' says Kitty. 'I admire the way British interior designers mix patterns so boldly and freely, and I always try to do the same.'

Now that Kitty's home is complete, she enjoys a constant stream of visitors. 'Everyone falls in love with the magical atmosphere, just the way I did,' she says. 'This cottage really is my dream home and I believe I was destined to live here.' 25



MASTER BEDROOM
Green accents lend a tranquil feel.
Walls painted in Farrow & Ball's Slipper Satin estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres



BATHROOM
Kitty painted the bath's feet to match the tiles. Mad King George super eggshell, £20 for 750ml, Fired Earth, is a similar vivid green shade



GUEST BEDROOM
These old shutters make novel headboards. Lassco is a good place to source vintage shutters, price on application



GUEST BEDROOM
This cosy scheme has a fresh country feel. Try Gabrielle hand-embroidered white pillowcase, from £60; and Blue Candy Stripe duvet cover, from £75, both Cologne & Cotton

FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 141

Insight

DECORATING IN A PERIOD STYLE

Inspired by the vibe of Kitty Bartholomew's retro interior? Recreate the look with our clever ideas



Upcycled, salvaged and retro pieces all have their place in a period scheme such as Kitty Bartholomew's.

The key is to reference the look rather than reproduce it, using strong colours, favourite items and a less-is-more approach for a vibrant, cohesive scheme.

Old school

Kitty's American home features a mixture of styles. Retro, vintage and Mid-Century are often considered different terms to describe a similar approach, however, all three are subtly different.

Retro describes an interior that typically features furniture by British brands including G Plan and Ercol. This look consists of soft furnishings with classic bold prints and decor that aims to create an authentic trend representing the 1960s or 1970s. Vintage describes interiors that use a more eclectic mix of reclaimed finds, such as French armoires and shabby chic-painted furniture, often combined with small floral prints. Mid-Century, however, is a slightly more refined look, with rooms that contain rosewood or palisander furniture from the highly collectable designers of the era, often set against a pared-back scheme so that the item is the single crowning element.

Before you start to put your own layout together, make sure you research

the look and follow items of furniture you like on auction sites so that you can start to train your eye. Once you feel you can spot the good buys and know the rates to pay, you'll be able to pick up statement pieces with confidence.

Mix it up

The key to this approach is to provide plenty of contrast. Start with a toned-down backdrop of simple painted walls or subtly textured wallpaper in pale, neutral hues. Once your background is complete, you can begin choosing period furniture that will fit into your space. Opt for long, low pieces such as sideboards to give a linear look, offset by one wall of feature shelving and coffee or side tables that are from or reflect the same era.

A period sofa or pair of armchairs could also help embellish a sitting room, but try to give them a slightly modern interpretation by upholstering in a bold colour or in a traditional fabric such as wool. Textured wallpaper, including grass or wooden plank designs, will work well as a backdrop, adding structure to the layout. Finally, aim to choose accessories in the same colour, for instance a collection of white antique ceramics, which will help interpret the design but won't overdo it. Subtle furnishings will prevent the look becoming too cliché.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE



'Think strong colours, and work with two main accents, bearing in mind that you'll need at least one linking item that features both colours. This could be a fabric, artwork or a rug. As long

as one decorative item links the colours, your interior will come together.

For inspiration, look to design movements of the era, such as Bauhaus, from which you could choose from colours such as blue, yellow, purple and orange. The colours need to be bold but not bright, so select hues that are pared back to give them an authentic tone. Bright, crisp shades are too 'new' and will date quickly. Look at the Farrow & Ball palette for ideas.

Find fabrics from the era you are referencing, as modern materials won't sit comfortably. Wool, leather, leatherette, grass paper, teak, rosewood, elm and maple all work. But don't overdo it – less is most definitely more.

It's very easy to replicate an interior from a period – all you need to do is follow an inspirational image that appeals to you. But stop before you feel you've done enough, and you'll probably get the levels just right.'

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■ The Vintage Home by Judith Wilson, £12.99, Jacqui Small Publishing

Full of tips on how to shop cleverly and mix creatively to perfect a vintage scheme.

EXPERT EYE

'Build up a vintage-style scheme gradually. It's the kind of look that needs layering, so spend time choosing pieces that mean something to you. Add a few luxe elements such as rich fabrics and statement lighting for a slightly more modern note'

ANGIE PINKNEY, DECARA HOME



BEACHFRONT BOLTHOLE

After a romantic weekend on the south coast, Rose Lam and Jos Lowette decided to create their own intimate seaside escape

FEATURE MAXINE BRADY | PHOTOGRAPHY JONATHAN JONES



HALL
'We made the coat rack out of reclaimed wood and old hooks,' says Rose. The rustic-style vintage bench, from £150, Barnaby's is a good match



SITTING ROOM
The blue sofa is the only new thing the couple bought for the house, as Rose wanted a comfortable piece that she and Jos could sink into. For a similar sofa try the Coast three-seater in Denim Combination, £1,300, DFS



DINING AREA

Rose and Jos found their 1960s record player online and picked up LPs from local charity shops.

The chunky jute rug is comparable, from £95, Rockett St George. Alcove painted in Sea Blue matt emulsion, £21.29 for 2.5 litres, Dulux



BATHROOM

Chequerboard flooring adds an Art Deco touch.

Dublin 599 flooring, £5.49sq m, Burts Vinyl Flooring. The Great Gatsby mirror is a match, £239, Furnish.co.uk



MASTER BEDROOM

This space was decorated with relaxation in mind.

The flat is available as a holiday rental via [airbnb.co.uk/rooms/3856943](https://www.airbnb.co.uk/rooms/3856943)

Alvine Kvist duvet cover and pillowcases, from £20; Jennylund chair, £165, both Ikea



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Third-floor Regency apartment, built in 1820

LOCATION

Hastings
ROOMS Hall, sitting room/kitchen, two bedrooms, bathroom

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

‘We also have a home in London,’ says Rose.



After a weekend in Hastings last year, Rose Lam and her boyfriend Jos Lowette were inspired to find their own weekend retreat in the south coast resort. ‘We came down from London on a cold, rainy February weekend, fell in love with the place, and kept coming back to explore the vintage shops and seafront,’ recalls Rose.

The pair viewed more than 60 places until they found the right one at an affordable price. ‘This Grade II listed flat had amazing views of the sea and the pier,’ says Rose. But the two-bedroom apartment in a Regency crescent had been rented out for years and lacked homely touches. ‘It hadn’t been looked after properly,’ she continues. ‘There were carpets throughout and the layout wasn’t for us. It had a tatty bathroom, a windowless kitchen in the centre, but it had large bedrooms and lots of potential.’

Rose and Jos had lots of ideas for the space and, once they bought it, they concentrated on renovations. ‘We stripped the place back to an empty shell,’ says Rose. The bathroom was replaced with a simple white suite, while the

bedrooms were painted in white and cream. For the larger jobs, Rose and Jos hired a local builder. ‘It was a big mistake,’ says Rose. ‘He’d turn up late, leave early, and everything was done badly. We spent most of our time project managing him.’ They soon parted ways and the couple started undoing the damage done. Realising that sanding the floorboards was too big a job to take on, they painted the floor white instead. ‘Fortunately, this has freshened up the apartment and made it feel really coastal,’ says Rose.

An open-plan scheme was created by knocking through the kitchen. ‘I spend most of my time there, so it was important to me to have a lovely space to cook and entertain,’ says Rose, who invested most of the budget on this area. ‘We saved money elsewhere with bargain finds – there are great charity shops and vintage places nearby, where we bought most of the furniture.’

Now it’s finished, the space has a perfectly balanced mix of retro finds that reflect the colours of the Sussex coast. ‘We love it here,’ says Rose. ‘Our weekends are spent cycling along the seafront and exploring the countryside. This place has become a real second home for us.’ 25

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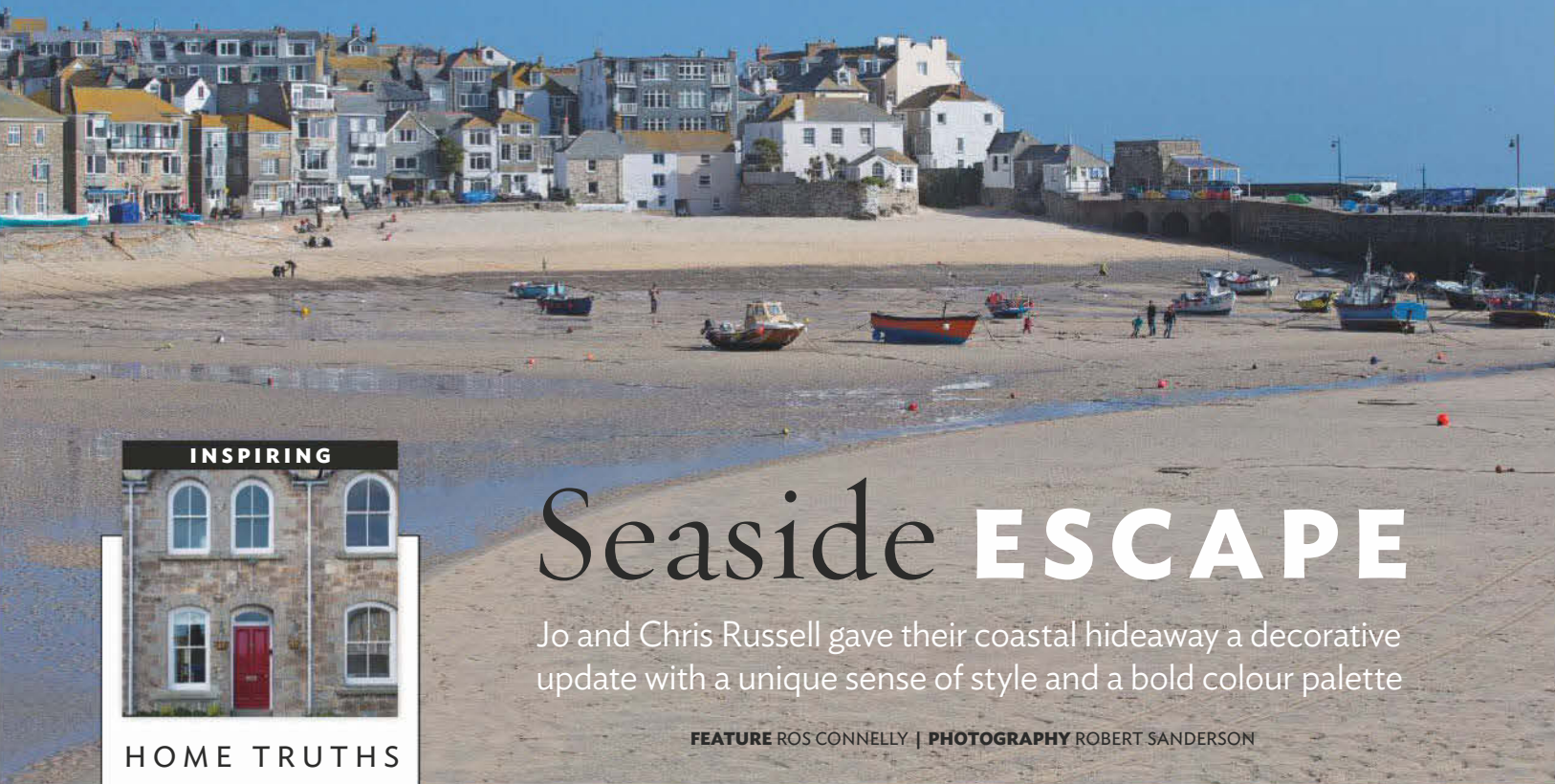
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INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Victorian granite terrace

LOCATION Cornwall

ROOMS Sitting/dining room, kitchen, five bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2014

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We still own our main home, which is in the country,' says Jo.

Seaside **ESCAPE**

Jo and Chris Russell gave their coastal hideaway a decorative update with a unique sense of style and a bold colour palette

FEATURE ROS CONNELLY | **PHOTOGRAPHY** ROBERT SANDERSON



SITTING ROOM

Quirky decor creates a welcoming space.

Serengeti rug, £109, I Love Retro. Aida the Cow canvas, £60, Whistlefish. Hare shade, £105, Helen Minns. Big Boy lamp base, £375, Loaf. Putteridge mirror, £245, The Chandelier & Mirror Company, is similar



I



2

I HALL
‘I love the vintage police station hooks,’ says Jo. For similar upcycled wall hooks, try Etsy, from £100

2 DINING ROOM
An all-cream canvas is teamed with bold pieces. Chairs, £59 each, Cult Furniture. Table, £1,950, Glenn Designs. Round half-red clock, £60, Royal Academy of Arts, is a match

When Jo and Chris Russell, and their daughters Isabella, 7, and Georgiana, 5, began looking for a holiday home, they knew they wanted something completely different to their remote house in the countryside. ‘We were after somewhere central that was big enough to host friends and family. So when we found this Victorian house in the heart of a bustling coastal town in Cornwall, we knew it was perfect.’

The purchase of the property went well, but the house needed a bit of updating. ‘Several walls had to be

stripped and tanked with a damp-proof membrane before being replastered,’ says Jo. The couple also installed two en suites and updated the bathroom. ‘In the master bedroom, we replaced the fitted cupboards with freestanding wardrobes to add character.’

To help with this revamp, they enlisted the skills of interior designer Kerry Knight from Beaten Green. ‘We asked her to create something a bit different and fun, with interesting features and colour,’ says Jo. To steer clear of a bold, monochrome effect, a palette of three balanced shades per room was chosen. ‘By



KITCHEN

‘A new worktop, sink and flooring transformed this space,’ explains Jo. Vinyl flooring, £600 including fitting, The Carpet & Homestore. Metod cabinets in off-white, from £57, Ikea, are comparable





GUEST BEDROOM

This symmetrical layout is perfect for when friends and family come to stay.

Coco single bed, £625, Loaf. Fornasetti Peonie wallpaper, £82 per roll, Cole & Son. For a similar chest of drawers paint try Burgundy chalk paint, £18.95 for 1 litre, Annie Sloan

using fewer colours, you create a more harmonising effect,' explains Kerry. Then, accents were added by using vibrant rugs and cushions.

All in all, the project went smoothly, even though they didn't have as much time as they would have liked. 'Work started the day the keys were acquired, but we only had four months before Jo and Chris were scheduled to bring their family down to stay,' explains Kerry. 'The job grew and grew, from ripping out cupboards and decorating, to installing new electrical sockets, building three new bathrooms, replacing the

radiators, modernising the kitchen and using six different wallpapers. It was hectic, but we managed it.'

Jo and Chris were thrilled with the results. 'It has a unique feel with bags of personality,' says Jo. 'As so many local suppliers were involved, from shops and auctions, it feels one of a kind.' But it also seems they haven't finished yet. 'We're considering extending the kitchen, plus we need to replace some windows and repaint the front door – I've wanted it to be a mustard shade since the start,' explains Jo. 'But I also love the house as it is, and would happily do it all over again.' 25

3 BATHROOM

The floor, with its colourfully patterned tiles, creates a quirky feel in this space.

Floor tiles from the Stamford range, £67.60sq m, Topps Tiles. Bath, £400, Bathroom Studio. Reclaimed wall cabinet, £179, Uneeka. Window painted in Blue Ground estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



3



MASTER BEDROOM

A selection of framed prints creates a focal-point wall.

Lou-Lou king-size bed, £895, Loaf. Shutters in Pure White, £1,800, Thomas Sanderson. Rug, £159, I Love Retro

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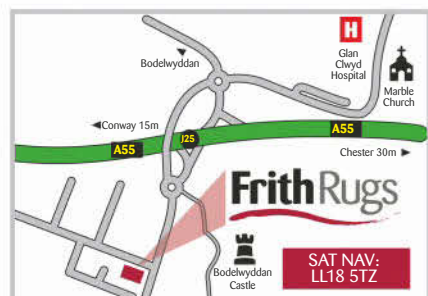
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DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Four-storey Victorian terrace

LOCATION

Southwest London

ROOMS Hall, sitting/music room, kitchen-diner, family room, basement suite, six bedrooms (three en suite), two bathrooms,

PURCHASED 1996

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, we lived in a cottage in Essex,' says Sam.

PATIO

Floor-to-ceiling glass doors merge these spaces together.

Flow sofa, from £633; scatter cushion, £44, both Cane Line. Franco Albini rattan ottoman, from £295, Twentytwentyone, is similar. La Palma Lem bar stool, £475, John Lewis

EXOTIC OUTLOOK

An eclectic mix of items from around the globe fuses with musical touches in Sam and Carl Osborne's uplifting home

FEATURE JO LEEVERS | PHOTOGRAPHY JAMES MERRELL



SITTING ROOM

Musical elements express the family's personality.

Haywood sofa in Aksu Magenta, from £1,600, Designers Guild, is comparable. Snowball pendant lamp by Louis Poulsen, £1,510, Skandium. Mirror Ball floor light, from £505, Tom Dixon. CH24 chair by Hans Wegner, £504, Twentytwentyone

Walking into Sam and Carl Osborne's home is as uplifting as a blast of late-summer sunshine. 'Even when it's grey outside, we've got shots of hot pink streaming in from the garden, and tropical fish downstairs,' says Sam. Then there are the white shutters throughout, angled to let in every inch of sunlight. And to complete the laid-back vibe, music is always playing. 'Music is big in this house,' explains Sam. This can clearly be seen when you look around the sitting room, which features a harp, grand piano and double bass.

But it's not just sound that livens up this London terrace. Thanks to Sam's skill at reinvention, the house has been growing and evolving for the 17 years they've

lived here with their daughters Maia, 16, and Asha, 15. 'It's been quite a journey, from the inherited chintz decor and jumbled-up layout to the calm and flowing space it is today,' says Sam. 'I wanted it to be a home where everyone has room to breathe and be creative.' Therefore, since the couple moved in, the property has been completely renovated and extended – in all directions. A loft conversion provided two bedrooms and bathrooms, while adding a side return created the streamlined kitchen that's perfect for entertaining.

The final stage of the work involved remodelling the windowless basement, which was being used as a playroom, into a chic family room with a guest suite. To improve the quality of light in this space,

BEST BUY
'I love the juxtaposition of punk rock posters and classical instruments found in the sitting room'

MUSIC ROOM

'I wanted this to be an area where everyone can relax and enjoy themselves,' says Sam.

Balzac armchair and ottoman by Matthew Hilton, £3,690, SCP. For a throw like this one try Designers Guild, from £87



KITCHEN-DINER

Pristine white surfaces make a beautiful working space for Sam, who loves to cook.

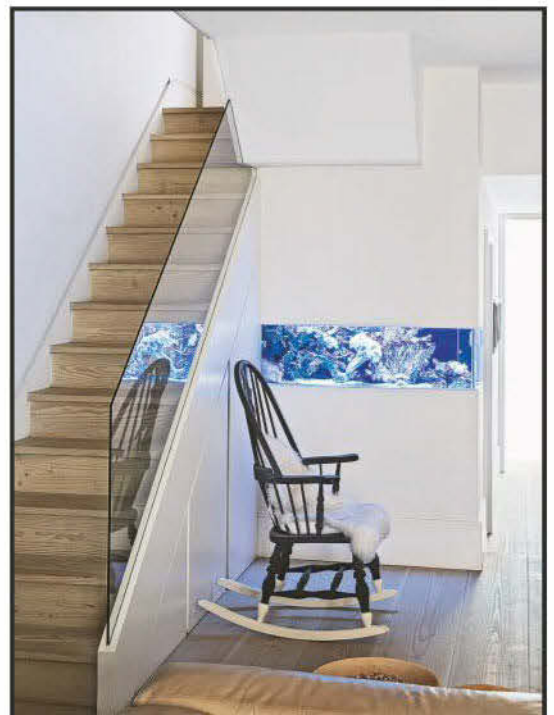
Units, price on request, Bulthaup. Urchin pendant light by Scabetti, £216, Within 4 Walls



FAMILY ROOM

'This is our chill-out zone, where we watch movies, listen to music and the girls spend time with their friends,' explains Sam.

For an original 1960s bubble chair by Eero Aarnio try Pamono, £2,548. Bespoke nest of tables, Studio Jon Male



floor-to-ceiling windows and a skylight were installed, and surfaces that help reflect the light were chosen, including glass, mirror doors and Dinesen flooring.

After growing up in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, and with her mother living in Oman, Sam's global upbringing subtly feeds into her decor. 'I visit my mum every year and always bring something home, be it a shell, a copper bowl or some Bedouin silverwork,' says Sam. 'I'd describe my style as Polynesian and Arabic with vestiges of London street culture and icons of contemporary European design.' So woven baskets nestle amid the clean lines of contemporary shelving and beach-shack timbers partner sophisticated leather. 'There's a lifetime of stories in everything you see,' she adds. Nowhere is this mix more apparent than in the music-cum-sitting room, where the hot pink sofa creates a dynamic contrast with a bold green poster of The Clash poster, which has been faithfully moved around every bedsit, flat and house Carl has lived in.

This bold shade of pink is echoed in the garden, where it takes on a more tropical tone amid palm fronds and foliage. 'The patio's ideal for entertaining or to soak up the sun,' says Sam. 'All we need to do is set Carl's playlist to mellow, then sit back and relax.' 25

MASTER EN SUITE
'Black tiles give a cocooning feel, while a silvery wallpaper finishes off the look,' says Sam. Woods wallpaper in Foil by Cole & Son, £90 per roll, Amara. Bespoke units by Helene Dahm Gullaksen. Black polished porcelain tiles, £18.95sq m, Walls and Floors, are near-identical

GUEST BEDROOM

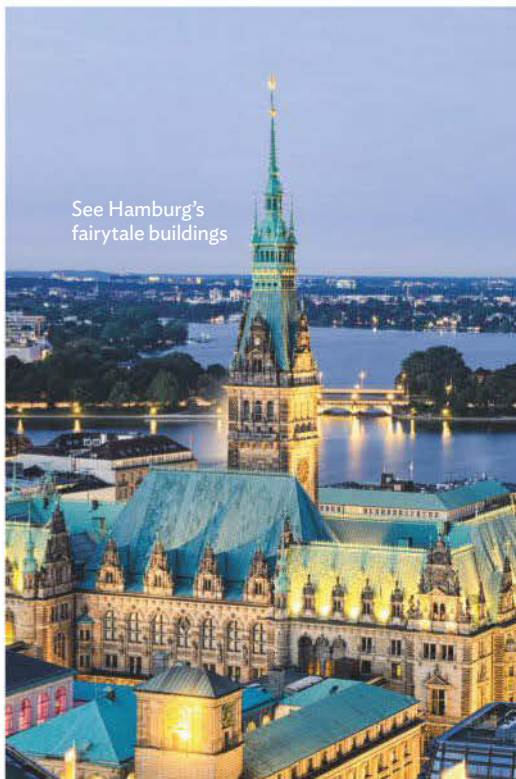
Light floods into this basement room via a long, rectangular skylight.

Mix it mirrored wardrobe, £181, John Lewis, would work here. Hissmon table top in white, £45, Ikea. For a yellow desk lamp like this one try Habitat, from £25



MASTER BEDROOM
'I love relaxing on the bed with our dogs and reading a good book,' says Sam. Bedlinen, from £45, The White Company. Eero Saarinen Tulip chair, £1,140, Utility. Fritz Hansen ant chair by Arne Jacobsen, £524, Heal's

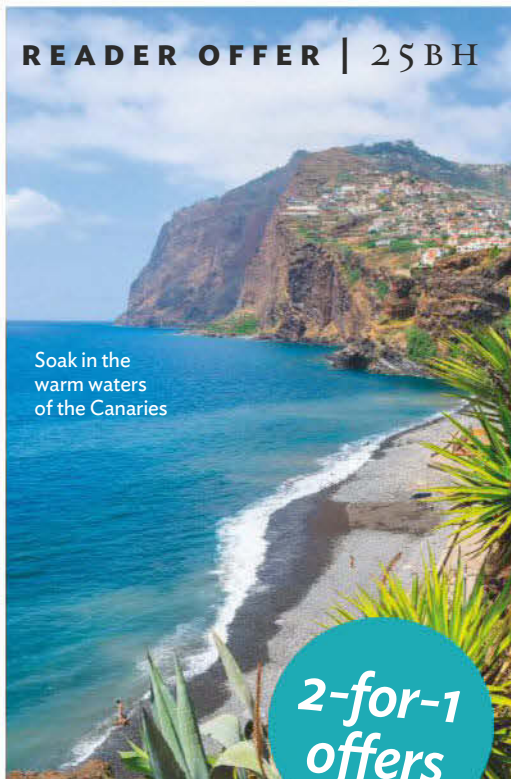




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THE SOURCE

Erica Miller shows how you can achieve the style secrets in this issue's homes

Design ideas



COORDINATED BOOK COVERS



For a harmonious look that is pleasing to the eye, organise your books by recovering them with a similar coloured spine. The Pilkingtons have covered and coordinated their favourite books and displayed them on the shelves according to colour. This clever aesthetic approach is a clever way of toning down and unifying the appearance of bookshelves that can sometimes seem disorganised or cluttered. To keep the look simple, the Pilkingtons covered their books in two complementary red and rust tones – make sure to pick a shade that works with your scheme.



SPIRAL STAIRCASE



Laura Stafford-Deutsch has a statement spiral staircase in the corner of her dining room – an ideal space-saving solution. Not only is it a stylish addition to her Victorian maisonette, but it's also a great way of utilising a dead area in a room. Compact and light, its inconspicuous design blends into the neutral tones of the walls. If you are considering a new staircase, be sure to consult a specialist company or an architect, as it is essential that what you have planned fits in both style-wise and proportionally. Remember that plans must comply with building regulations.



BRIGHT-COLOURED FLOORING



The Pilkingtons have given their cloakroom a touch of individuality with this dramatic fuchsia floor. This is a great way of injecting colour into a scheme. The vibrant pink shade makes a bold statement and really helps to personalise an often-overlooked room. It also contrasts beautifully with the green wallpaper, not just in terms of colour, but also the vintage design of the paper is strikingly opposed to the bright modernity of the floor. To combine style with practicality, this confident look can be easily achieved with durable floor paint, vinyl, lino or rubber flooring.

Inspired shopping



Pages
128 – 131

Mirror with shutters

A charming mirror with wooden shutters creates a striking focal point in Karen O'Connor's bathroom. You might like this charming Hillpark arched mirror with a soft matt painted finish in pale mushroom, £135, The Chandelier & Mirror Company.



Pages
95 – 97

Geometric rug

A geometric design flatweave rug anchors the scheme in the Russells' stylish sitting room. For something comparable, treat your feet to the royal blue and off-white Aztec woven cotton dhurrie, from £65, Mahout Lifestyle.



Pages
64 – 68

Tailor's dummy

A tailor's dummy takes pride of place in the corner of the Clemences' bedroom. Rope Mannequin, £140, The French Bedroom Company.



Pages
108 – 110

Farmyard tiles

A panel of handpainted chicken tiles make an interesting design feature in the Hills' kitchen. To recreate this look, try the Langsham Cock handpainted tile, £35 each, the Farmyard collection, Tiles of Stow.



Pages
35 – 39

Trough-style sink

A large, deep sink is a practical and stylish fixture in Philippe Boudariat's utility room. For something equally tasteful try the RW Atlas stone apron kitchen sink with centre drain in Arabescato marble, £2,190, Waterworks.

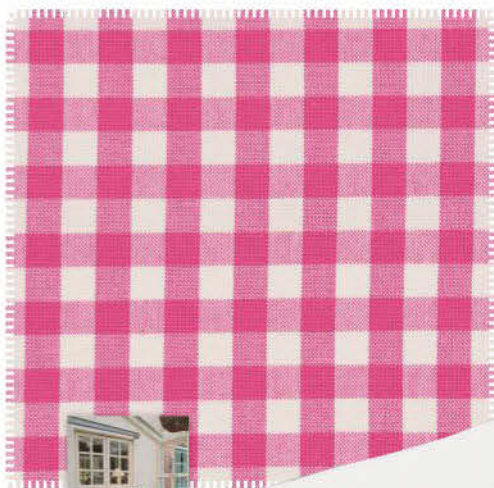


Pages
80 – 83

Junior bed

A stylish, contemporary child's bed works perfectly in the Hourstons' loft bedroom. For something in a similar modern Scandi design, try the Junior Bed by Oliver Furniture in white and oak, £1,875, Nubie.

Inspired shopping



Pages
121 – 123

Gingham fabric

Annie Sharp has used a classic and timeless gingham fabric to upholster her conservatory sofa. For similar try Whitby cotton check in cerise by Sanderson home, suitable for upholstery, £26m, fabricsandpapers.com.



Pages
116 – 119

Bentwood chairs

The beautiful dining chairs in the Williams' dining room are a classic and coveted style. Try the classy Canna Dark design with cane seat and metal cross back, £104, Sweetpea & Willow.



Pages
20 – 26

Lace-accent bedlinen

With exquisite detail, lace edge bedlinen evokes elegance in the Vernets' bedroom. Recreate the look with the Langley collection, from £12 for a standard pillowcase, John Lewis.



Pages
108 – 110

Mirror cube table

If you admire the side table in the Hills' sitting room, then take a look at the mirrored storage cube by Febland, £75, WorldStores.



Pages
59 – 62

Storage jars

Striking containers make just the right impression in the Ullrich-Norths' clean and contemporary kitchen. For an out of the ordinary storage solution try the Tira large cream storage jar, £20; Tira medium green storage jar, £15; and Tira small orange storage jar, £10, all Habitat.



Pages
121 – 123

Half-tester

To create a sense of drama in the bedroom, a corona like the one in Annie Sharp's master scheme is hard to beat. For something like this try the Sultan half-tester, £155, Oka. It's created from paper rope painted and woven to look like antique rattan, with a decorative metal rim.



Pages
116 – 119

Freestanding bath

A boat bath works beautifully in the Williams' bathroom. For something akin to this try the Tay bath, £3,750, Drummonds.



Design solutions

LIGHTING YOUR BEDROOM

Clever lighting affects the way we feel about our surroundings. Take a look at these illuminating ideas



HEADBOARD LIGHTS



Pages
20 – 26

A pair of vintage 1950s lights have been attached to the wooden headboard in Amélie Vernet's master bedroom. Neat and symmetrical, it's a stylish lighting solution for a smaller room. These

headboard-mounted lights allow for bedtime reading without taking up bedside table space. Here, flexible, energy-efficient LED reading lights are attached to the top of the headboard. They would work either side of the bed, too. Cama bedside reading light, £335 each, John Cullen Lighting.

READING LIGHTS



Pages
84 – 87

Task lighting, like reading lights, have a specific purpose – to shed light directly onto specific areas. In Claire Carter's bedroom, chrome swing arm wall lights make it easy to read before bed.

In this scheme, a neat LED wall light takes up minimal space. Not only is it low energy, but it is directional, too, which means that it can be moved to cast light exactly where needed. Cirrus wall-mounted light, gold plated with beige leather, £405, Beadlight.

BEDSIDE LAMPS



Pages
64 – 68

Good lighting should be functional and beautiful. A pair of elegant table lamps teamed with a chandelier create a perfect lighting scheme in the Clemences' home. When planning bedroom lighting,

think about what you need at different times of the day. At night, low lighting creates calm, but something brighter makes your morning easier. Here, the soft glow of lamps enhances the sensory appeal of the luxurious furnishings. Sophia clear glass table lamp, £285, LuxDeco.

5 OF THE BEST *Easy chairs or armchairs*

Relax in style with our pick of the most comfortable and elegant seating around



Louis XV-style armchair in beech, fabric and leather, price on request, Grange



Regent armchair in navy, £1,495, Jonathan Adler



Lola armchair in cotton pink, from £535, Luku Home



Sturridge armchair, £1,250, Kelly Hoppen



Anita armchair in oatmeal with blue stripe, £450, Swoon Editions

TOWN MEETS COUNTRY

Julie Hill transformed a neglected cottage into a cosy sanctuary that better suits modern living

FEATURE AMANDER MEADE
PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Grade II listed Victorian cottage

LOCATION Lincolnshire

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, four bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2013

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I used to live in a 1920s bungalow in Nottinghamshire,' says Julie.

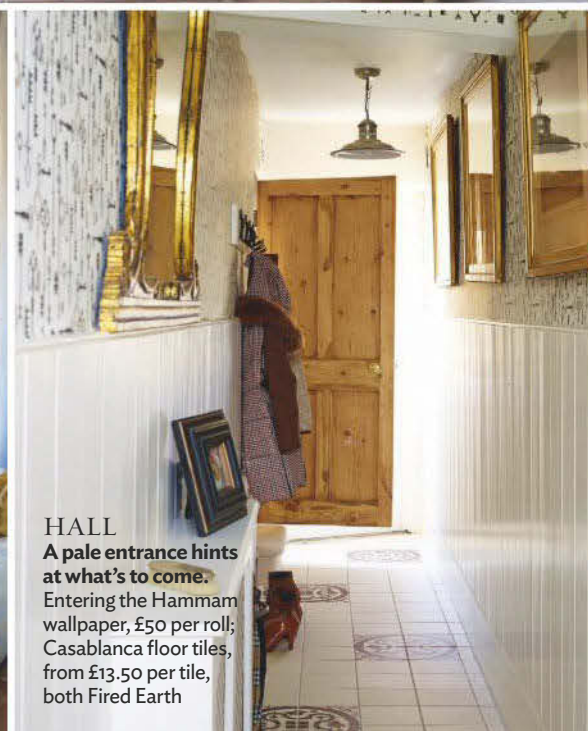
SITTING ROOM

The mirrored coffee table updates this look from classic to contemporary.

Venetian cube, £90, Homes Direct. For a similar sofa try the Canterbury in Lloyd Stripe Gold, price on application, Parker Knoll. Toile de Jouy cushion cover is a match, £25, Jim Lawrence. Dukes Damask wallpaper in Sky Blue, £85 per roll, Jane Clayton, is comparable

Two years ago, Julie Hill decided to take the plunge and move home and business from Nottinghamshire to a historic town in the heart of Lincolnshire. 'With my daughter Lucinda, now 24, settled at university, it was time for a fresh start,' she says. 'After living in villages all my life, I wanted to settle down in a town and enjoy a completely different lifestyle, but in a home that Lucinda would enjoy, too.'

Julie had visited the area many times and loved its open spaces, shopping and famous 17th-century buildings. Having set



HALL
A pale entrance hints at what's to come. Entering the Hammam wallpaper, £50 per roll; Casablanca floor tiles, from £13.50 per tile, both Fired Earth

her heart on a stone house, she was thrilled when she came across the perfect renovation project – a rustic Victorian three-storey townhouse. 'Although it needed a complete overhaul, I relished the challenge.'

The first thing Julie did was to reverse the position of the sitting room and dining area to create a kitchen-diner. 'The original living zone was at the front of the house and as it was much larger than the kitchen, it just made sense to swap them over,' she explains. Julie then had to wait for the plumbing, electrics and heating to be replaced before she could even think about redecorating.

'I would describe my taste as a Gustavian style with a dash of French country flair, and plenty of light is important, too,' says Julie. 'The hall had been painted and tiled in a

KITCHEN-DINER

Upholstered benches add depth to this neutral scheme.

Table, £1,488; benches, £395 each, both One World Trading. Smeg fridge freezer, from £1,205, John Lewis. Aga, from £6,295





LUCINDA'S BEDROOM

Soft hues and textural fabrics come together to lend a vintage feel.

Floor lamp, £322; bedside tables, £260, both One World Trading.
Feather & Black is a good place to source beds like this one

chocolate brown, so I updated it with a neutral palette and an unusual wallpaper, which has livened up the space dramatically.'

Julie, who loves to regularly cook for friends, installed kitchen units in restful colours and combining them with unfitted pieces, she has created an open-plan environment that's ideal for dinner parties. 'One of the most enjoyable parts of designing the kitchen was choosing the granite for the worktops,' says Julie. 'It was in a raw state and had to be cut and polished to fit.'

In the new sitting room, formerly the kitchen, the range cooker has been boxed in. 'I didn't want it on view but I also couldn't



BATHROOM

An elegant armchair adds a touch of opulence.

Louis XV style cane-back armchair, £266, Crown French Furniture, has this look. White wall tiles from the Architecture range, £44.44sq m, Fired Earth.



MASTER BEDROOM

Vibrant dresses on an antique coat stand show Julie's bold personality.

Etienne Louis bedstead is an alternative, £950, John Lewis. Faux-fur throw, from £250, Helen Moore

bring myself to remove such an old feature,' she says. 'Besides, subsequent owners might want to reinstate it in the future.'

Upstairs, Julie brightened up the bathroom with a white suite. 'I then dressed up the scheme with my favourite toile de Jouy wallpaper, which I teamed with matching blinds for a cohesive look,' she explains. For her bedroom, Julie wanted a slightly more feminine feel. 'I hung a lace panel behind the bed to add interest. Lucinda's room, however, is very different, with contrasting colours and textures – I try to avoid schemes that are too matched and stilted.'

Now two years on, the house is finished and Julie couldn't be more pleased. 'It's a special place that's marked a new chapter in my life,' she says. 'I'm so glad I made the move.' 25

FAVOURITE SHOP 'I've shopped at One World Trading for years – its furniture is beautiful, of a high quality and affordable'



DINING AREA

Pops of colour in a strongly wooden scheme add life.

Table, £800, Shabby Chic Country Living. The Bramley cream armoire is identical, £665, Laura Ashley. Green Urban junior chair, £30, Ikea

NEW-BUILD



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Modern detached home

LOCATION Surrey

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner/family room, utility room, cloakroom, playroom, study, five bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2012

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a Victorian terrace in the centre of Dorking,' says Jenny.

MODERN VINTAGE

Jenny and Doug Branson wanted their eclectic collection of retro pieces to work in a contemporary setting

FEATURE JENNY HEEL | PHOTOGRAPHY LOL JOHNSON



HALL

An informal arrangement of black-and-white prints using the same type of frame creates cohesion in this relaxed gallery of family photos. Ribba frames, from £5, Ikea. Upholstered vintage cinema chair, £240, Shabby Chic Country Living



KITCHEN

Vintage crates and factory stools contrast with slick, modern units. Try the Perch bar stool, £89, Rockett St George. Drinks crates, £15 each, Ardingly Antiques Fair



I



2



3



SITTING ROOM

Bold floral motifs and green tones ensure a coherent rather than mismatched look.

Isla sofa is a close match, from £1,240, Sofa.com.

French screen, £75, Christique Antique Centre.

Vintage lamp and base, £30, Talbot House Antique Centre



With three small boys running around, life in Jenny and Doug Branson's period townhouse was proving a bit cramped. 'We were bursting out of it,' says Jenny. 'We needed to upsize pretty quickly to accommodate our growing family – Jasper, now 7, and twins Kit and Jude, 5.'

Although the couple were on the hunt for another period property, they were willing to look at anything to avoid having to rent. 'This house was a real surprise,' says Jenny of the new-build they unearthed in Surrey. 'Light was streaming in through the windows, and the open-plan living space it offered just couldn't be matched elsewhere without undertaking serious renovation work.' As the first people to live in the house, they were

taking on a blank canvas that interiors stylist Jenny couldn't wait to get her hands on. 'I think potential buyers had been a bit daunted, but this was a perfect project for me,' she says.

Three years later, the result is a modern, functional family home brought alive with vibrant colours and vintage furniture. 'I don't believe a new space has to be filled with contemporary pieces – quite the opposite,' says Jenny. 'Many older pieces from our last house work just as well in this environment.'

This method of blending new with retro has injected the vast double-height sitting room with style and personality. 'This is such a big room that it needed drama to make it work,' says Jenny. An eclectic mix of modern and classic furniture has been used to create two distinct areas, resulting in a functional

1, 2 & 3 SITTING ROOM

Whimsical wallpaper has been hung on the chimney breast for a dramatic effect, while books are carefully ordered in a simple, modern storage system.

Vintage wicker chair, £20, Ardingly Antiques Fair.

Map (unframed), £27, Map Marketing.

Hackney Empire White wallpaper by House Of Hackney, £148 for a 180 x 300cm mural, Wallpaper Direct. Small Harry sofa bed in house brushed cotton, £1,660, Sofa Workshop. Kallax shelving unit in white, £120, Ikea



MASTER BEDROOM
This tranquil space is an homage to Jenny's love of colour.
Kingsize Coco bed in Natural Cotton Linen mix, £825, Loaf. Vintage scarf cushion, £60, Teacosy Home

living space. 'Nothing is too precious for the kids to clamber all over,' says Jenny. 'And when they're all tucked up in bed, it still feels grown up and cosy down here.'

The open-plan kitchen-diner area plays host to a much more vibrant palette. 'This is where we spend most of our time,' says Jenny. 'The boys often spill out from the playroom, so we've got an extra seating area here, and the table is always covered in colouring books or play dough.' And when that's all packed away, the couple have plenty of room to entertain.

Bold pops of colour are mirrored in the boys' bedrooms, where polka dot wallpaper,

striped rugs and painted furniture create fun spaces designed to stand the test of time. In the guest bedroom and adjacent shower room, Jenny was determined to establish a luxurious feel. 'My parents live abroad so they often come to stay for significant amounts of time,' explains Jenny. 'I wanted to have a space that people were really comfortable in.'

With its blend of old and new, bold and neutral, the house is now full of personality. 'I'm a firm believer that style needn't cost the earth as long as you use your imagination,' says Jenny. And her vision has created a home that's fresh, eye-catching and inspiring. 25

I GUEST BEDROOM
This boutique hotel-style space at the top of the house is a sanctuary.
Lattice Wild Garden wallpaper by Clarke & Clarke, £43 per roll, Wallpaper Direct. Kingsize Louis bed in natural linen, £945, Loaf

2 EN SUITE
The calming colour scheme follows through into the couple's bathroom.
Patagonia towels, from £10, John Lewis

3 TWINS' BEDROOM
Kit and Jude's room combines graphic wallpaper and bold vinyl decals.
Polka Dot Jet Set wallpaper, £28 per roll, Wallpaper Direct. Wall sticker, £26, Little Chip. Marlow cot bed, £99, John Lewis

FAVOURITE FEATURE *'I love the wallpaper in the sitting room, but it's a real Marmite item – people either love or hate it'*



BATHROOM
Mustard tones from the guest bedroom are echoed in the adjacent shower room.
The Stardust black tiles would suit this scheme, £122sqm, Topps Tiles



STUDY
Jenny's workspace is a riot of colour and inspiration.
MDF framed cork display boards (painted white), £27 each, Board Warehouse



FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 141



EXOTIC BLOOMS

Save £15 when you buy two magnificent Medinilla – a rare house plant that has a timeless beauty with its unique flowers

MAGNIFICENT MEDINILLA

Why buy cut flowers when you can get a gift that grows? The exceedingly rare Medinilla house plant is a sight to behold, with its beautiful, pendulous bubble-gum pink flowers measuring up to 20cm in length. Cascading over the side of the pot, the flowers make the plant look fantastic as a standalone specimen. Noted as the most glamorous house plant in the world and one of the prettiest tropical plants ever discovered and cultivated, this is a must for anyone who wants to make a pure style statement. Performing best in pots that are tall and statuesque, Medinilla's bright pink flowers contrast against its thick, glossy evergreen leaves with grace and poise – each flower represents a year of growth, thus the plant should be viewed as an investment. Medinilla has been specifically bred to stay compact, so it's perfect to make a feature of smaller spaces. Supplied as a three-year-old plant in a 15cm pot.



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REPLANNED



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY Detached cottage, built in the 1700s

LOCATION North Yorkshire

ROOMS Sitting room/kitchen, dining room, four bedrooms (two en suite), two bathrooms

PURCHASED 2011

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We also have a house in Harrogate,' says Shona.

SEA CHANGE



Having breathed new life into a neglected coastal cottage, Shona and Roger Williams are now writing the next chapter of its rich history

FEATURE JANET McMEEKIN | PHOTOGRAPHY JEREMY PHILLIPS



SITTING ROOM

Stylish and carefully chosen accessories enhance the nautical feel of Shona and Roger's home.

Blind in Regatta ticking stripe fabric in duck egg, £18m, Clarke & Clarke. Cushions in Skipper Mineral fabric, £14m, Graham Sanderson Interiors. Zigzag throw in duck egg, £29, John Lewis, would work here. For similar rope lanterns try House of Fraser, from £12.50 each

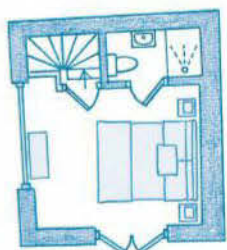


DINING ROOM

Beams were painted white for a bright and welcoming ambience. Isabelle solid-oak dining chairs, £125 each, John Lewis. Ocean Lighting's searchlight miners' lanterns, £42 each, are near-identical. Camera tripod floor lamp is comparable, £135, Bhs

AFTER

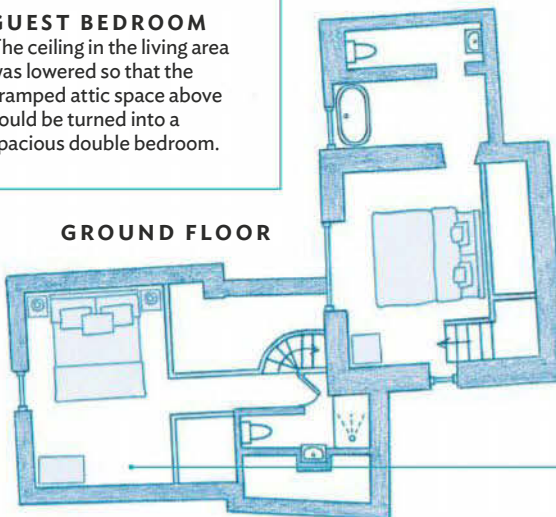
LOWER GROUND FLOOR



GUEST BEDROOM

The ceiling in the living area was lowered so that the cramped attic space above could be turned into a spacious double bedroom.

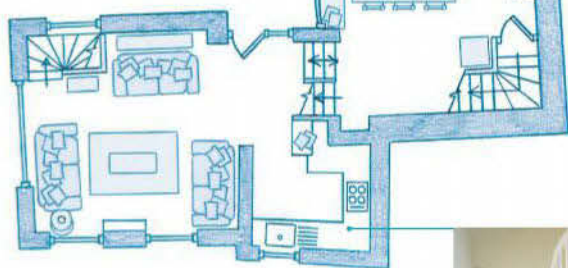
GROUND FLOOR



EN SUITE

Originally, the only way to reach the bedroom that is at the far end of the cottage on the ground floor was via another sitting room, which wasn't practical if guests were to stay. To solve this problem, Shona and Roger decided to install a dividing wall to create a new corridor. The remaining space was then turned into a sizeable en-suite bathroom.

FIRST FLOOR



BEFORE



REPLANNED

The position and orientation of the original staircase in the sitting room was changed to improve the flow and lead down to the lower ground floor, which now boasts a practical en-suite

bathroom. To accentuate the feeling of light and inject a modern twist, the staircase was painted white and installed with a glazed balustrade. The original kitchen has now become a TV room, and a

small bathroom that was beside the dining room was removed. This space was then incorporated into the kitchen to create an open-plan kitchen/sitting room that's perfect for entertaining.

For many years Shona Williams dreamt of buying a coastal bolthole, and memories of halcyon days spent shrimping and building sandcastles eventually lured her back to her favourite childhood holiday destination. 'I love the cliffside villages in north Yorkshire,' says Shona. 'They're incredibly quaint with spectacular views. But even before we began looking, my husband Roger and I knew we'd struggle to find somewhere as houses sell almost instantly in this area.' But we were determined to find a seaside escape.

The couple decided to take a proactive approach by leafleting more than a dozen properties one weekend – a plan that reaped rewards. 'After a few weeks, we heard from a lady who was selling,' says Shona. 'Although we didn't know which house it was, we were thrilled.' They quickly arranged to view the cottage, but their excitement soon turned to disappointment when they set eyes on it. 'It hadn't been lived in for six years and we realised it was uninhabitable,' says Shona. They started to consider whether taking on such a huge renovation project could be a big mistake. 'It needed gutting and looked like a costly task,' continues Shona. 'And because of

DESIGN TIP *'Take into consideration your surroundings when choosing decor and furnishings'*

its fairly inaccessible position, all the building materials would have to be carried by hand up a steep narrow path. Even so, the house was a great size and in a wonderful location – so we took the plunge.'

Apprehensive about how to rearrange the layout to create four double bedrooms, the couple turned to Karen Stephenson of Whitelam Homes. 'She was unfazed by the project,' says Shona, 'and instantly suggested lowering floors, raising ceilings and turning the jumble of rooms into a home that would flow seamlessly.' However, building work soon unearthed more problems. 'Some parts of the cottage were held together by barely anything,' she explains. 'But we managed to find ways around the challenges of bringing a neglected building back to life.'

With the property taking shape, Shona liaised with interior designer Bea Evans. 'We decided on a blue, cream and beige palette to echo the seaside location,' says Shona. 'We then chose furniture and accessories that would create a cosy space.'

The result is an idyllic retreat where the couple can relax with their family, including their grown-up sons Simon, Matthew and Tim. 'We want to pass the cottage on to future generations,' says Shona. 'Like us, we hope they'll fall in love with this unspoilt area.' 25

GUEST BEDROOM

This palette of blue and white creates a restful retreat for visitors.

Double bed, £779; side tables, £329 each, both the Dorset range at Bhs. Dorma blue quilt, £100, Dunelm, would suit this scheme



BATHROOM

A statement bath makes the most of the sea views.

Marlborough slipper bath, from £2,625, Victoria + Albert, is a match. Marble Mosaics has similar pebble flooring, £26.99m sq

ATTIC BEDROOM

Characterful original features are highlighted in this small loft space.

Blinds in Sail Stripe Marine fabric, £14m, Graham Sanderson Interiors. Anchor cushions, £19 each, Comfy Heaven Pillows at Etsy, have this look



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Secret GARDEN

Annie Sharp couldn't wait to update a tired cottage and bring the outdoors in

FEATURE MAGGIE COLVIN | PHOTOGRAPHY TONY TIMMINGTON

CONSERVATORY

Once an old lean-to, this new glass extension is the perfect place for entertaining guests. Fallen Fruits old rectory chair, £68, Wayfair, is similar. Suffolk check Peony is comparable to the cushion fabric, £24.50m, Ian Mankin. Try Cranham tablecloth, £35, Cath Kidston



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Gamekeeper's cottage, built in 1850

LOCATION

Lincolnshire

ROOMS

Hall/kitchen, sitting room, dining room, study, utility room, cloakroom, conservatory, three bedrooms, bathroom

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here, I lived in a flat in southwest London,' says Annie.

KITCHEN

Practical features, including a wall shelf for pans and an overhanging worktop for tea towels, ensures everything is at hand.

- Baumatic cooker, £499, Currys. Beams painted in New White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



SITTING ROOM

Plump cushions and cosy throws ensure guests feel at home.

For a sofa like this one try Hurlingham, £980, Oka. Lamp, £105; cushions, from £30 each, all Decorative Country Living



Set in an acre of beautiful English gardens in Lincolnshire, you'll find a Hansel and Gretel-style Victorian cottage owned by Annie Sharp. 'Being

a passionate gardener, I knew of this property because it belonged to a famous garden designer in the 1950s,' says Annie. 'It was created to look unmanicured and overgrown – just like the secret garden in the novel of the same name.'

Though Annie had always admired the property, she never dreamt that one day it would come up for sale. But when she left London to move to rural Lincolnshire, she contacted a local estate agent at an opportune moment. 'I jokingly said I wanted the cottage that was once owned by Herbert Exton, only to discover it had come on the market that morning,' says Annie, who put in an immediate

FAVOURITE SHOP

'I adore Decorative Country Living in Stamford – it personifies everything I love'

offer. 'It was almost derelict,' she says, 'but for me, it was about the garden and the area.'

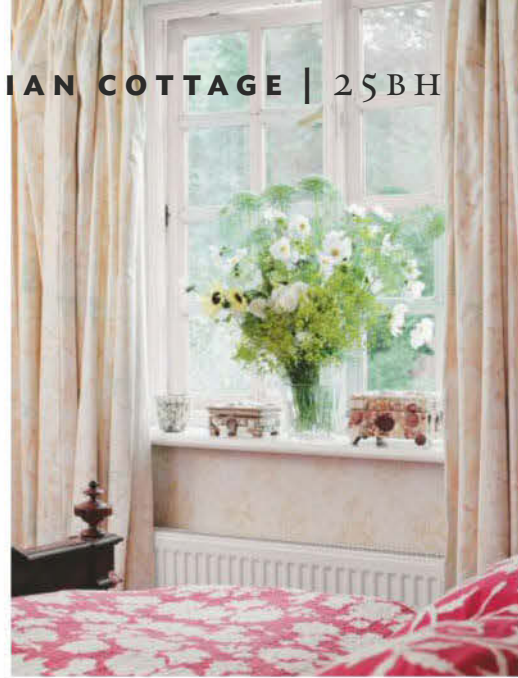
Every room had to be gutted. The windows were replaced and all floors were damp proofed. 'There were layers of lino, old wallpaper and woodchip everywhere,' recalls Annie. 'It also needed rewiring, replumbing and a new roof.' Once these repairs were made, she moved on to the decor. 'I used reclaimed materials where possible, including kitchen tiles and garden slabs in the conservatory, which replaced a rickety lean-to,' says Annie.

Then some features were modernised to make the space feel lighter. 'I had the beams sandblasted and limewashed and also plastered a few walls,' she explains. To finish off the brighter look, Annie installed antique French-style fire surrounds and stoves, which suited her painted furniture and patterned fabrics.

Even though Annie can sometimes find the cottage's compact layout a challenge, the picturesque garden that seduced her so many years ago makes it more than bearable. 'Being so close to nature is my idea of paradise,' she says. 'I'm very happy here.' 25

GUEST BEDROOM

A copper bedstead adds instant elegance. Chest of five drawers, £330, The Dormy House, is near-identical. Eiderdown, £229; mirror, £95, both Decorative Country Living. Walls painted in Clunch estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



MASTER BEDROOM

'I inherited this bed from my parents and it's so comfortable,' says Annie.

Martagon cushion cover in red, £64, Oka. Mahogany French peacock bed, £700, HomesDirect 365, would suit this scheme



BATHROOM

Coastal-accessories complement the vibrant colour scheme in here.

Heritage Wessex bath, £1,200, Victorian Plumbing, is a match. Tongue-and-groove panelling painted in Green Verditer intelligent eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene





BRIGHT & BEAUTIFUL

Jo and Nathan Birtle took on a dated terrace, determined to remodel it into a family home full of style, elegance and colour

FEATURE JANET McMEEKIN | PHOTOGRAPHY ANDREAS VON EINSIEDEL

KITCHEN-DINER

Rejigging the layout and removing walls has created the wonderful open-plan space the couple yearned for.

Bespoke kitchen units, £27,000, Daulby and Tickle. Walls painted in Strong White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Dining chairs sourced through Julia Blunt Interiors, covered in Mezzola lime fabric, £45m, Designers Guild



INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY A three-bedroom Victorian-style terraced house built in the 1970s

LOCATION London

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, drawing room/study, kitchen-diner, cloakroom, courtyard garden, three bedrooms (all en suite)

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before living here, we lived in a large terrace opposite Battersea Park,' says Jo.



SITTING ROOM

'Julia Blunt Interiors gave me confidence to go for bold splashes of pink here,' says Jo.

Walls in Cornforth White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Nickel Manhattan lamp, £2,130, with fuchsia satin shade, £328, Porta Romana. Sofa covered in Karina taupe fabric, £16m, Clarke & Clarke





After their son moved out, Jo and Nathan Birtle found they were using barely half the rooms in their large terraced property. This was brought home to the couple one day when Nathan happened

to say: 'Well, we appear to have carved out a lovely one-bedroom flat from our five-bedroom house!'

When the couple bought their south London home in 2001, they were thrilled it had so much space for themselves, their son Hugo, now 18, and an au pair. 'But when I stopped working and Hugo went to boarding school at 13, we ended up using only one of the bedrooms, one bathroom and the kitchen-diner, which, with its TV and sofa, doubled up as a living room,' says Jo.

Having decided to downsize, the couple began researching the property market. 'I didn't actually want to move any further than the next road,' says Jo. After biding her time for several months, they widened the search by half a mile. Interesting homes began to catch their eye, including the house they ended up buying. 'Although it was a maze of small, boxy rooms, it had a cheerful feel and had the potential to be an even brighter space,' recalls Jo. 'We also found out that the house was built in the 1970s after being bombed in World War II, and therefore not listed, which meant not jumping through any planning hoops.'

The Birtles contacted an architect, who suggested moving the staircase from the middle of the house to one side, removing some of the walls and repositioning others to create an open-plan layout and better flow. In 2011, the pair found rented accommodation while the builders worked on site for a year. 'It was astonishing,' says Jo. 'At one point during the build, we could stand on the ground floor and look up four storeys to the sky.'

As the house took shape, Jo liaised with Julia Blunt Interiors to create mood boards for every room. 'I felt nervous about taking on such a large project myself,' says Jo. 'The girls at Julia Blunt had helped with the house that we'd lived in before and I wanted them to have carte blanche here to create a welcoming family home with a classic contemporary edge. They encouraged me to make the bolder choices that, in my heart of hearts, I really wanted.' After deciding on a subtle backdrop of grey and taupe, Jo's favourite shades of fuchsia, purple, blue and green were then cleverly incorporated into the room schemes. 'The pops of colour are fresh, vibrant and really help bring the space to life,' she says.

The result is a home that oozes understated elegance. 'It may be smaller than our last place, but it's beautifully formed,' says Jo. 'This new layout means it's not just more practical but also a wonderful, light-filled house that we all adore.'



SITTING ROOM

Replacing windows with elegant doors has enhanced the feeling of symmetry. Harome console table, £3,133, Rebecca Scott. Flamingo cushions on chairs, £30 each, Secondavita Upcycled Cushions



GUEST BEDROOM

A palette of blue and taupe creates a restful feel in this space, which also doubles as Nathan's study. Hemnes white day-bed frame with three drawers, £260, Ikea. The Romo gold-leaf convex mirror would suit this scheme, £625, Omelo

HUGO'S BEDROOM

'I wanted this to be a comfortable space that our son wouldn't outgrow,' says Jo. Nickel medium leaf table lamps, £125 each, Heathfield & Co. Walls painted in Elephant's Breath estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. The Lexington star bedspread has this look, £200, John Lewis



DESIGN TIP *'It's worth investing in good lighting and, if you're renovating or building a home, make sure you plan where they will go in advance'*

MASTER BEDROOM

The oversized velvet headboard injects an extra touch of luxury. Headboard covered in Kariba fabric in Zinc, £86m, Today Interiors. The Honeycomb Column lamp base is comparable to this one, price on request, Porta Romana



MASTER EN SUITE

The couple's bathroom is a sleek, uncluttered space. Zone Verso rectangular basin, £960; Zone two-drawer unit in walnut finish, £752, both CP Hart



UNIQUE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

17th-century thatched cottage

LOCATION

County Galway

ROOMS Sitting room/
kitchen-diner, back kitchen,
three bedrooms (one en
suite), bathroom

PURCHASED 2003

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before buying this place, I shared
a three-bedroom semi in Galway
City with my sister,' says Karen.

FIRST-TIME LUCKY

*When Karen O'Connor visualised her dream home,
she didn't expect it to materialise quite so quickly*

FEATURE & PHOTOGRAPHY BARBARA EGAN/REPORTAGE





KITCHEN-DINER

'I kept the existing Shaker-style units and just painted the pine doors,' says Karen. Take a look at the Chateau carved round table, £629; and Chamonix French-style dining chair, £167 each, both Crown French Furniture



SITTING ROOM

The rugged original 17th-century fireplace adds a sense of drama to this cosy rustic setting. Ektorp two-seat sofa with Isfall Natural cover, £450; cushions, from £11; Ludde sheepskin, £30, all Ikea



While living on a housing estate in Galway City, Karen O'Connor yearned for a unique home with character – a place to make her own.

So, on 1 January 2003, she asked her sister, who co-owned the semi-detached property they lived in together, if she would consider selling. She agreed, they put the house on the market and it was snapped up immediately, leaving Karen with limited time to find another place to live. 'I knew I'd have to rent a home for a while and thought a thatched cottage in the country would be fun,' she says. 'So I looked in the papers and online and found one in a rural area beside the sea, just seven miles away.'

'When I went to have a look, my first impression was that it was quite dark inside, but it was such a beautiful old cottage in a wonderful location that I agreed to rent it,' says Karen. 'Hazel, the lovely owner, said, "You will really enjoy living here – this house will wrap around you like a blanket."' And so it proved. Karen loved the house so much that she asked Hazel if she would consider selling it to her. Initially, her answer was no

but a few weeks later she changed her mind, and a delighted Karen bought the house.

Although she had a limited budget, she was determined to tackle the dark interior of brown carpet, mahogany furniture, green woodwork and pine tongue-and-groove cladding on all the ceilings. 'The colour had changed with age into a dull orange, and I felt the ceilings were bearing down on me,' says Karen. 'So the first thing I did was to paint them white.' The effect was immediate.

French flavour

Encouraged, Karen used the homes in her favourite areas of France as inspiration for the interior design. 'I was searching for the pale blue-grey that looked so wonderful in houses in La Rochelle and Île de Ré for the woodwork, but couldn't quite get it,' she explains. 'In the end I mixed the colour myself.'

She also found a plush carpet in a toning pale olive to replace the existing floor covering, which turned out to be a big mistake. 'I hoped it would give a cosy, comfortable feel, but it was a complete disaster, as it cancelled the feeling of lightness I had achieved with the paint colours and the furniture just

sank into it,' says Karen. In the end she had to bite the bullet and get rid of it. She decided on light, vintage-effect timber flooring instead, but rapidly ran into another problem. The ground was too uneven to lay the flooring so Karen had to have everywhere levelled first, which took a considerable time.

Next up was replacing the dated plastic bathroom suite. 'The claw-foot bath I bought was expensive, and I wasn't sure I could afford it, but I'm glad I went for what I truly wanted,' says Karen. A good-quality linoleum in a classic black-and-white chequerboard pattern caught her eye, and she extended it out into the back kitchen. 'I don't like the cold feel of tiles, which is the reason why I opted for timber panelling around the bath.'

Future plans

Work in the house is an ongoing process, and Karen plans to replace the brown carpet in the guest bedroom very soon. 'In the long term, I'd love to extend the property, incorporating the back kitchen into a larger open-plan scheme,' she says. 'But my house works brilliantly for me – I'm so lucky I've got what I really wanted, a truly unique home.' 25





MASTER BEDROOM

'The theme in here was light, light, light,' says Karen.

Alice white metal bed frame, from £179, Bed Frames UK, is similar. Antique Rose Bouquet duvet cover, £79, Cath Kidston



BATHROOM

Karen describes this space as having an easy living, relaxed, beach-style feel.

Roll-top bath, £450, Tubs & Tiles. Tresco handpainted mirror and shutters, £215, Oka

FAVOURITE ROOM *'I painted everything in the master bedroom white including the floor, which makes it so bright and inviting. I also like the way daylight flows unobstructed under the bed, which gives it a lovely floating effect'*



UPSTAIRS LANDING

Slightly differing shades of white lend contrast.

Pointing full gloss, £106 for 2.5 litres, is a close wall colour; and Wimborne White floor paint, £116 for 2.5 litres, is a good match, both Farrow & Ball



GUEST BEDROOM

'This is my next project, starting with the carpet,' says Karen. 'I can't wait to replace it.'

Carolyn Donnelly Eclectic Tamar duvet set, £55, Dunnes Stores.

Large French-style white floor-standing mirror, £299, Forever Interiors, is comparable

MEANT TO BE

Laura and Patrick Butler-Madden loved the outcome of their renovation project so much, they made it their new home

FEATURE KATHY HURST | PHOTOGRAPHY BRETT CHARLES



While out running errands, Laura Butler-Madden came across the perfect renovation project – a rundown house on a wide, leafy street, just a stone's throw from an pretty southwest London common.

‘My husband, Patrick, and I used to live in Battersea but with the overheated market in the capital, it was virtually impossible to find any properties, so we started to search further afield,’ says Laura. ‘One day, I saw an ugly-duckling semi on a road of beautiful houses so I decided to take a look around.’

The property, which had been vacant for several years and then occupied by squatters, was in dire need of attention. ‘It hadn't been

touched since the 1970s,’ says Laura. ‘The bathroom was filthy, the kitchen was grimy, and there was peeling carpet everywhere.’

But the couple were convinced they would be able to bring it back to life. ‘We were a little nervous as it had been on the market for over six months,’ says Laura. ‘But our surveyor confirmed there were no structural problems, and people had just been scared off by the scale of the project.’

A lengthy refurbishment ensued – rooms were gutted, ceilings ripped out and a rear extension with doors opening onto the garden was added. The uPVC windows were replaced with timber casements and a rotting front door was ditched in favour of a 1930s design. ‘We had the new door reconditioned

KITCHEN-DINER

A clever design defines areas for relaxing, dining and socialising.

Fritz Hansen Drop Chairs, £270 each, Heal's.
Long Island corner sofa, £2,610, Sofa.com.
Kitchen units, £35,000, designed by Patrick who owns interior design company Holmes & Butler, and built by Roundhouse Design.
Jensen Dangle light, £350, John Lewis



DESIGN TIP 'Keep colour schemes simple and neutral – you can easily swap accessories and furniture if your tastes change'

INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Semi-detached 1930s house
LOCATION Southwest London
ROOMS Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, utility room, cloakroom, five bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom
PURCHASED 2014
PREVIOUS PROPERTY
'We used to live in a Victorian house in Battersea,' says Laura.



SITTING ROOM

Mismatched furnishings create a welcoming feel.

Valentin ottoman in Amarena
Dexter's linen, £375, Sofa.com.
Chandelier, £375, Graham and Green



MASTER BEDROOM
‘An upholstered headboard lends a luxurious feel,’ says Laura, who blogs at littlemisshomes.com. Valentin king-size bed, £995, Sofa.com. Harriet swing-arm wall lamp in brushed nickel, £204, Hector Finch, is similar

FAVOURITE ROOM *‘I love the master bedroom – the abundance of light accentuates its calming colour palette and elegant furnishings’*

and put in new glass for a modern look,’ says Laura. ‘There were very few original features, so we reinstated fireplaces and added character where possible. We chose wooden doors at the back of the house rather than aluminium bifolds because they give the kitchen a slightly New England vibe.’

Although the couple – who run a property renovation and interior design company – initially envisaged the project as a business venture, they were soon seduced by the charm of the house. ‘A few months

into the work, we began thinking about living here ourselves,’ says Laura. ‘We’d heard on the grapevine that someone wanted to buy our old home and things just fell into place.’

With the building work complete, Laura began sourcing plantation shutters, bleached-oak flooring and period-style radiators for an airy, feminine feel. The couple then opted for a neutral palette, creating a sleek backdrop for bright accessories, including powder-blue cookware, cushions in dusky pink, a lavender ottoman and a striking wirework pendant. But

it is the open-plan kitchen and family room with its bespoke handpainted cabinetry, which is the showstopper. Sunlight streams through the doors, reflecting on the Carrara marble worktop and hi-gloss metro tiles. ‘Both of us enjoy cooking, and the layout is perfect as we can talk while we prepare meals,’ explains Laura. ‘And as the glass doors lead out to the terrace, it’s an ideal space for entertaining.’

Indeed, the couple now feel fortunate to have discovered this place. ‘It’s a great house in a perfect location – we love it,’ says Laura. **25**



BATHROOM
A walk-in shower saves on space. Try Chaplin radiator, £419; Hudson Reed shower, £25; both Victorian Plumbing



GUEST BEDROOM
Patterned wallpaper adds interest and depth. Free Fall wallpaper, £99 per roll, Juliet Travers. Velvet tub chair, £445, Oliver Bonas. White window mirror, £225, Cox & Cox

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DISTINCTIVE



HOME TRUTHS

THE PROPERTY

Brewer's house, built in 1896

LOCATION Belgium

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen-diner, study, music room, boot room, utility room, basement studio, four bedrooms, bathroom

PURCHASED 2008

PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a much smaller house in Holland before moving here,' says Yvonne.

HOME BREWED

Yvonne and Boris Eijkenduijn moved from the Netherlands just over the border to Belgium where they transformed a former brewer's house

FEATURE PENNY BOTTING | **PHOTOGRAPHY** HOLLY MARDER/AVENUE LIFESTYLE



SITTING ROOM

'This house has lots of windows, which is unusual for Belgian properties,' explains Yvonne.

Ercol Windsor chair, £955, Lee Longlands. Séraphine table, £100, Maisons du Monde, is similar



DINING ROOM

'Boris built the table from a design I drew,' says Yvonne.

Birds & Roses wallpaper, £25 per roll, Cath Kidston. Chiltern dining table with chair, £599, The Great Furniture Trading Company, would suit this scheme



KITCHEN-DINER

The zinc-covered island provides an elegant space for breakfast.

Zinc worktop, from £250, UK Architectural Antiques, is similar. David Hunt light in green, £130, Ocean Lighting, is a match. Wall plates, from £8 each, Cath Kidston

After Yvonne and Boris Eijkenduijn sold their home more quickly than expected, the pressure to find somewhere to move to was on. 'The new owners wanted to move in straight away, which was fine, except that we had nowhere to go,' recalls Yvonne.

So it was a stroke of luck when, soon after, a property magazine that came through the letterbox had an advert that caught their eye. 'We saw this wonderful house that once belonged to a beermaker, whose brewery used to be next door,' says Yvonne. 'It had spacious rooms with plenty of natural light and the price was very reasonable. We could hardly believe it, until we realised it was in Belgium.'

This actually proved to be fortuitous, as Yvonne explains: 'At the time, we lived just 45 minutes away from the Belgian

border, and one of the reasons for wanting to move was because we needed extra space,' she says. 'In addition, we discovered that we could get more for our money there than we thought. So we went to take a look around.'

'Unfortunately the house was in a pretty poor state,' continues Yvonne. 'It hadn't been lived in for more than a year and there was ivy growing over the entire exterior. However, we were able to look past this and we could see it had potential.' As their mortgage and paperwork was in order, Yvonne and Boris were able to complete the purchase in just a week, and because they were in a position of having extra disposable income after the move, they could afford the changes they wanted to make almost immediately. 'Luckily the house is listed but not

DINING AREA

A collection of mismatched chairs lends an informal vibe.

Harry Bertoia-style wire chair, £139, Vita Interiors. For a table like this one try the Louis design, £470, Maisons du Monde





MUSIC ROOM
This monochrome scheme has been given a playful touch with pastels. Flavel Thurcroft gas stove, £549, Fireplace Megastores, is comparable

protected, so we could alter a few things, providing they were approved by the necessary organisations,' says Yvonne.

First of all, they installed central heating, and updated the electrics, gas, water and drainage. After the main work was complete, they moved on to the kitchen, which involved pulling down what they thought was one, but proved to be eight false ceilings. 'We had no idea what we would find – there was 100 years' worth of renovations and we also discovered thousands of pine cones that had been used as insulation,' says Yvonne.

Once this had been dealt with, the couple could make decisions about the decor. 'We started with a white backdrop, and then added green, pink, blue and cream for a fresh

scheme,' explains Yvonne.

'For furnishings, I like to mix Scandinavian style with mod cons. I also upcycle items I find left on the street – which is quite common in the Netherlands, as it's a country where nothing is wasted.'

The couple are seasoned renovators – this is their fifth project in 17 years – but even they found restoring this house harder than expected. 'We have a bit of a thing about old properties – we always want to bring them back to their former glory, but this one did come with more challenges than we first realised,' says Yvonne. 'When people pass by, they are so happy to see what we've achieved that they stop to thank us. But we're the ones who couldn't be more pleased with the finished result.' 25

DESIGN TIP *'Don't do everything in a week, spend time creating a home that expresses your style'*



BATHROOM
Bright accessories liven up this neutral space. Walls painted in Parma Gray estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Dickens & Jones polka dot towel, from £12, House of Fraser, is a match

BEDROOM

Yvonne has kept to her colour code of only using a few hues to prevent it from looking too busy.

Rosalie pillowcases, from £15 for duvet set; for a rug like this one take a look at the Tejn, £10, both Ikea. Eglo Hanifa pendant light has this look, £156, Ocean Lighting



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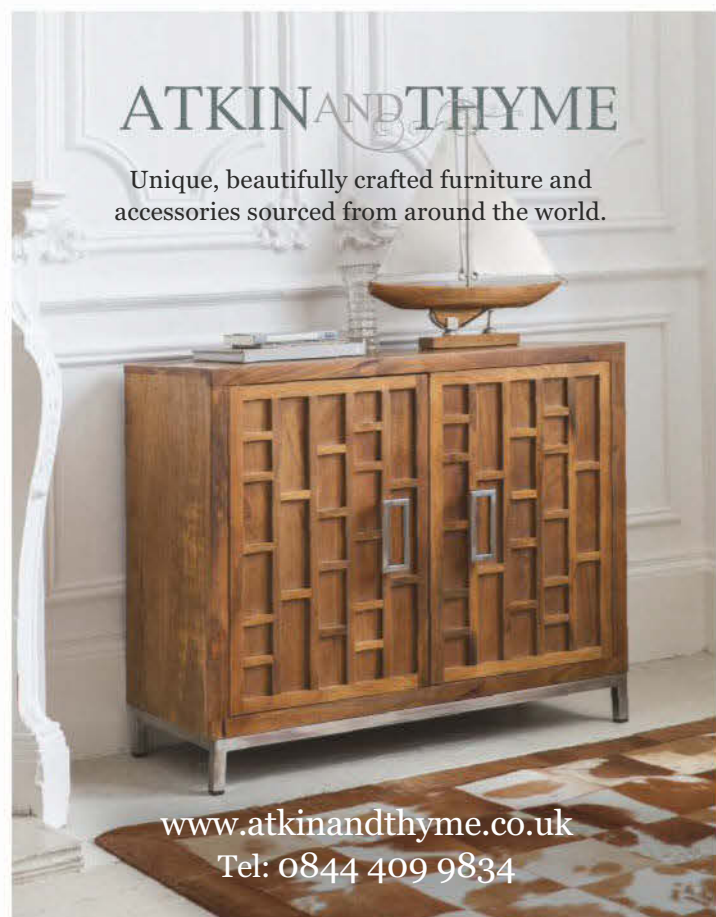
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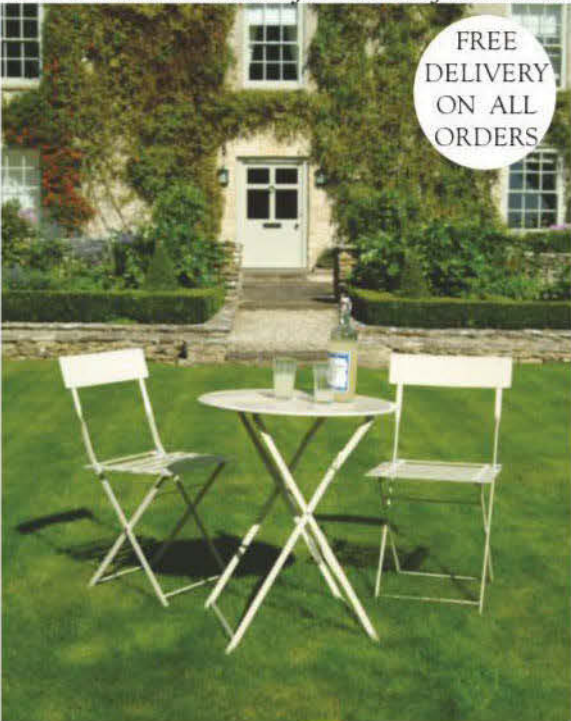
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